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art
COLLECTOR



RICHIE CARTER

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May 9 - 26, 2024

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Frank Oriti

Frank Oriti, *Ironing*, oil on canvas, 48 x 36 in



May 2024
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As Real As It Gets

Frank Orti, *Still Standing*, oil on canvas, 48 x 36 in



LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHERS



Art of the Animal

Welcome to the May issue of *American Art Collector*! We can affectionately say this is our contemporary animal fine art issue. Our special sections include Art of the Horse, Wild at Heart and Wildlife. This issue is beautiful from front to back. For those of us who collect animal art, it is the eyes of the subject that draw us in when admiring a painting or sculpture. We hear this over and over from appreciators of animal art, and I believe it to be true. Please be sure to take note of these powerful portraits as you turn through these pages.

The artists featured inside this issue are among the top in their genre. We encourage you in advance, as you start your journey through the pages of the magazine, to buy existing works from galleries or commission an original portrait from your favorite animal artist. Gallery owners will be happy to connect you with one of their talented artists to start you on your way.

The May issue also contains our Art Lovers Guide to Collecting Fine Art in Santa Fe. "The City Different" is known for its huge art market, with hundreds of galleries, numerous arts districts and art ranging from Native American pieces and Western works to contemporary realism, and so much more. We have first-hand experience in Santa Fe every year, as a sponsor of SWAIA's *Santa Fe Indian Market*, so we know the city well. If you are looking for an excellent location to hang out, explore world-class galleries and enjoy the vibrant art scene, Santa Fe is the destination for you—and we've got you covered. Please see Page 58 for tips on planning your collecting adventure in Santa Fe! It is a great issue and we hope you enjoy!

Wendie Martin Adolfo Castillo

Wendie Martin and Adolfo Castillo
Publishers



ON THE COVER

Elizabeth Floyd, *Simple Pleasures are Much Better*, oil, 36 x 24". Available at Principle Gallery in Charleston, SC.
See our coverage on Page 100.



MAY 2024 / MONTHLY

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ARTWORK DETAILS - Robert Moore : *In The Shade*, Scott Yelonek : Polaroid-1147



“If I could say it in words there would be no reason to paint.”

- Edward Hopper

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS IN JACKSON HOLE

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Wild for Art

Welcome to the June issue of *American Art Collector*!

We have a lot of exciting content for you this month, beginning with our three-part Collector's Focus dedicated to the animal kingdom. We begin on Page 70 with the wildlife component which showcases artists inspired by creatures that inhabit the wilderness—from our backyards to the most exotic of locales—including bears, bison and bobcats, to elephants and apes, birds of prey and sly fox.

This is the wildlife that inspires awe and fascination. We feel a connection to them, but they remain elusive, free and one with the natural world. We follow up that section with a focus on an entirely different kind of animal—those whose kingdom is our homes. We love our pets beyond measure with an unconditional love that matches theirs for us. Because of this, pet portraiture is a thriving market and we'll introduce to some of the top artists working in this popular genre and the galleries that represent them.

Lastly, we have the elegant horse—a subject that has captivated humans for centuries—and artists for nearly as long. For horse people, their bond with the animal has a spiritual dimension that many can only express through art. You will experience the passion for all these life forms through the unique visions of a selection of talented artists displayed across more than a dozen pages.

That's not all we have to offer in the June issue. In addition to more than a dozen gallery show previews, and an extensive exploration of the Santa Fe art scene, our features this month are particularly noteworthy. We have a piece on a film called *Movement, Light, and Life*. Film isn't something we typically cover but this love story between two late-19th century painters has a unique element. All of the artwork in the movie was created by contemporary representational painters—and much of it is for sale on the film's website.

We also check in with all three winners of the Bennett Prize on Page 48, and hear about the impact the award has had thus far on their lives and careers, and get a glimpse of their most recent work.

There's a lot to sink your teeth into in this issue, so dig in!

Sarah Gianelli

Sarah Gianelli
Managing Editor
sgianelli@americanartcollector.com



MAY 2024 / MONTHLY

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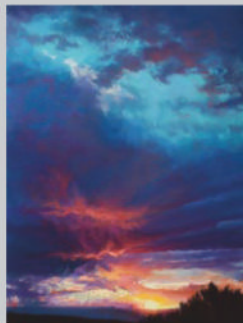
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Billy Moro-Wey
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Passage



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Sandia Shadows, Red Grasses
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Kathy Falla Howard, The Mohave



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BENNETT PRIZE® 3 FINALISTS: (Left to Right) Haley Hasler, *Eve of the Eucalypt* (detail), 2023; Laura Karetzky, *Night Hawks* (detail), 2022; Ayana Ross (2021 WINNER), *The Call* (detail), 2022

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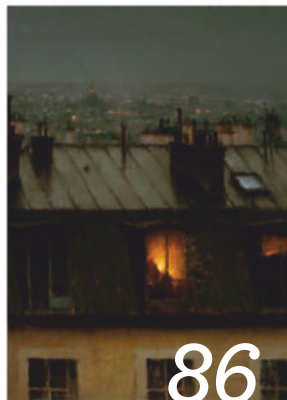
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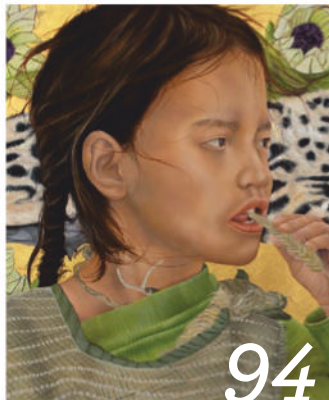
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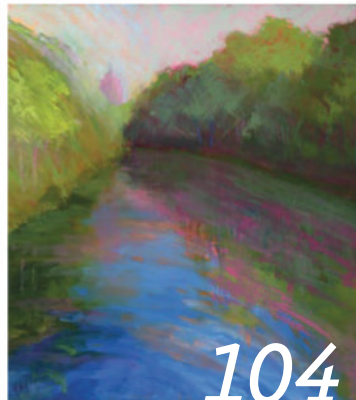
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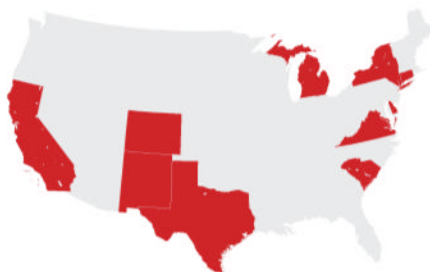
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Friday, June 21st | 9:00 am - 5:00 pm PST

(Light refreshments will be served.)

Saturday, June 22nd | 9:00 am - 4:00 pm PST

Auction Hours:

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ART FAIR JACKSON HOLE, AUG 16-18

ARTS ON THE GREEN, JACKSON WY SEP 8

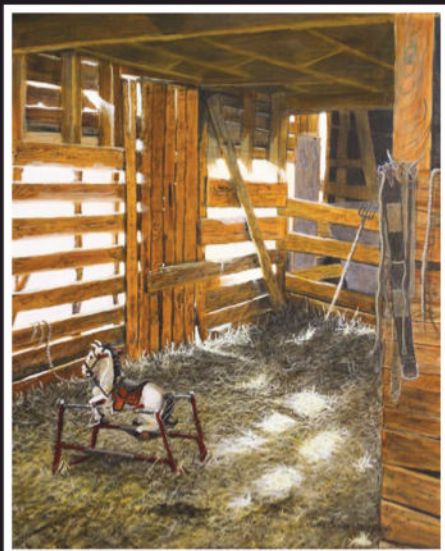
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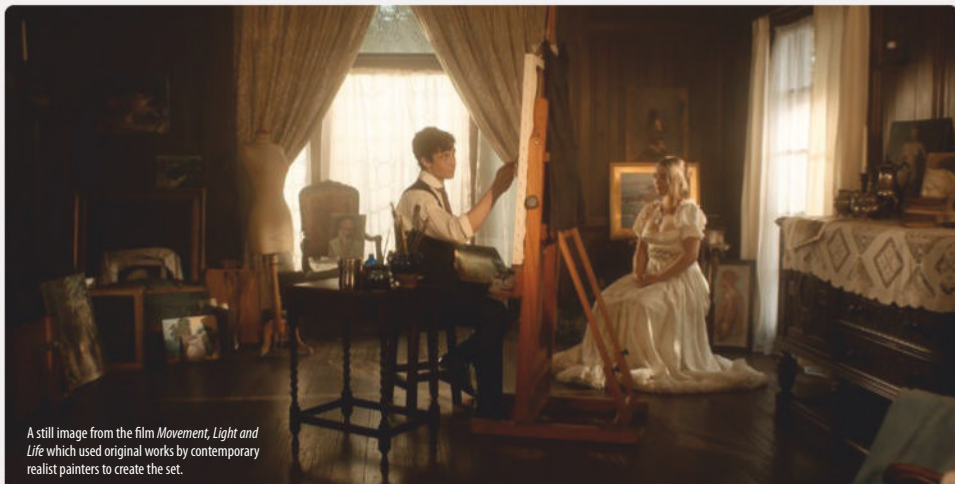
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"Kindred Spirits", 16x20", Acrylic, By Suzie Seerey-Lester

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A still image from the film *Movement, Light, and Life* which used original works by contemporary realist painters to create the set.

May 11

Film: *Movement, Light, and Life*

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Through May 3

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May 3-17

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May 3-31

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Kat Kinnick: A Benevolent Force
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Through May 5

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May 11

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May 24-August 1

American Artists Professional League: Spring Members Online Virtual
admin@aaplinc.org
www.aaplinc.org

Through May 25

Kristin Moore: Through the Bayou, Into the Garden
Ferrara Showman Gallery
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Through May 28

The AIS 8th Annual Impressions: Small Works Showcase
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Through June 2

Enchanted Colors
Millicent Rogers Museum • El Prado, NM
www.pastelsnm.org

Through July 7

Nora Maité Nieves: Clouds in the Expanded Field
The Norton Museum of Art • West Palm Beach, FL
www.norton.org

Through July 7

Developing Stories: Native Photographers in the Field
Eiteljorg Museum • Indianapolis, IN
www.eiteljorg.org

Through July 14

Wangechi Mutu: Intertwined
New Orleans Museum of Art • New Orleans, LA
www.noma.org

Through July 29

Exquisite Creatures
Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art • Bentonville, AR
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Through May 31

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Through May 31

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Canyon Road Spring Art Festival

Dozens of artists working in all forms of media will provide an inside view of their creative processes at the 11th annual *Canyon Road Spring Art Festival* on May 11. Galleries along Santa Fe's historic Canyon Road will present an array of new art in virtually every medium, including paintings in oil and acrylic, watercolors, drawings in pastels, charcoal, pen and ink and graphite, 2D and 3D mixed media works and collages, photography and digital artwork, bronze and metal sculpture, wood working, ceramics, pottery, glass fusion and glass art, hand-crafted jewelry, leather works and more.



Artists work on paintings while viewers observe during a past Canyon Road Spring Art Festival.



The Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City.

Whitney Museum and Hyundai Partnership

The Whitney Museum of American Art and Hyundai Motor Company have announced a new 10-year partnership that aims to support the *Whitney Biennial* exhibition and improve the museum's outdoor gallery space. The partnership will also enable artists to test their aspirations and incubate their creativity. The newly imagined outdoor exhibition project, the Hyundai Terrace Commission, offers an innovative platform for artists to experiment, respond to the space and the neighborhood, and showcase their work to the world. Envisioned by Renzo Piano and originally coined the "Test Platform," the Whitney Museum's largest outdoor gallery is a flexible and dynamic space that enables artists to realize large-scale and monumental installations.



Donna Frostick, *Sky Platform*, 2023, collage, 17 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 14 $\frac{1}{4}$ "

The Myth of Memory

Artspace in Richmond, Virginia, is hosting several new exhibitions this spring, from April 26 to May 18. Among these is a solo show for painter and collagist Donna Frostick, who "blends realism and abstraction, inviting viewers to immerse themselves in scenes that are otherworldly and yet somehow familiar," the gallery notes. Frostick earned her BFA in painting and printmaking from Virginia Commonwealth University and has had her work shown throughout the Mid-Atlantic region and the South. *The Myth of Memory* is her eighth solo show in the past six years.



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Flora, oil, 10x10"
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"Ghost" 24x18",
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Wild Things

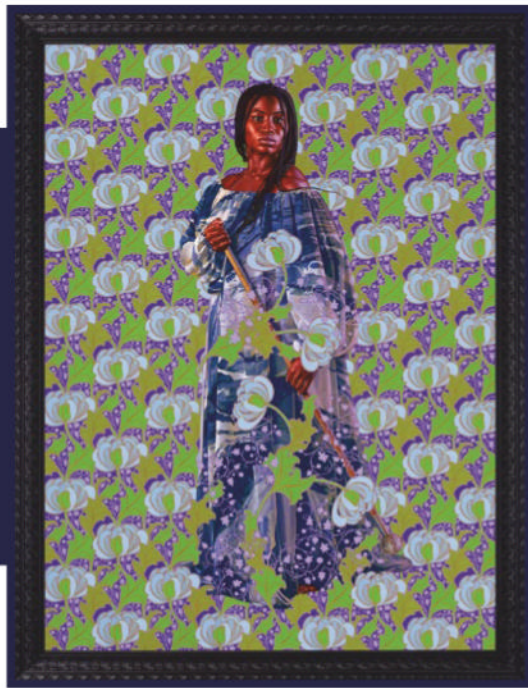
New in 2024: The "Wild Things" Collection

These pieces and more will be available at Tamara Nelson Art Gallery in Laguna Beach, CA

Amref honors Kehinde Wiley

Amref Health Africa (Amref), the foremost African healthcare organization in the world, will present African-American artist Kehinde Wiley with the Rees Visionary Award during *ArtBall 2024*. Best known for his portraits that render people of color in the traditional settings of Old Master paintings, including his most famous subject, Barack Obama for the National Portrait Gallery, Wiley is a tour de force in the American art world. Amref's Rees Visionary Award, named after their founder Dr. Thomas Rees, honors individuals who have changed the discourse around African and Black art. *ArtBall* will take place in Brooklyn, New York, on May 4.

Kehinde Wiley, *Portrait of Mame Kéwé Aminata Lô*, 2021.
© Kehinde Wiley. Courtesy of Galerie Templon, Paris.



Visitors explore the showroom during a previous edition of the *Laguna Beach Festival of Arts*.

Laguna Beach Festival of Arts

As one of the nation's oldest and most highly acclaimed juried fine art shows, the *Laguna Beach Festival of Arts* has been running for an astounding 90 years. The annual fine art show is set in an open air gallery and features artwork from more than 100 award-winning Orange County artists. From paintings, glass, ceramics, photography and more, the festival showcases a variety of mediums and artwork styles for avid collectors and attendees to explore and purchase directly from the artists. Festival goers can also experience live art demonstrations, music, opportunities to chat with the artists and more. This year's festival runs from July 3 to August 30.



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Small Game Hunter, 2018, oil on panel, 20 x 16". Collection of Sasha and Lance Grover

Queen of Hearts

*Rose Freymuth-Frazier alchemizes
the formative influence of her mentors into
her own vision of strength and sensuality*

BY MICHAEL PEARCE

Rose Freymuth-Frazier paints with the dexterity of a highly trained artist, and she is an outstanding member of the new generation of figurative painters that emerged during the great revival of representational art in the first decades of the 21st century. If studio wisdom is passed down like the laying on of hands practiced by the ancient hierophants, then she is an exceptional priestess of the bohemian church of paint, for she studied with two of the great characters of the turning millennium, painters who carried the torch through the dark decades of the 20th century. The evidence of their influence is apparent in her work, and her paintings emulate them, without imitation. She has her own voice, and it is a serious voice of strength and sensuality.

She found the first of her mentors, Steven Assael, at the Art Students League of New York, when she slipped into a demonstration class. In the 1990s Assael painted an extraordinary series of beautiful portraits of punks and strip-club dancers, showing, like Nerdrum, how traditional techniques could be used to express contemporary ideas, refuting the ridiculous doctrines of the so-called avant-garde. When she saw them, Freymuth-Frazier saw paintings of her peers. "I had a lot of stripper, counterculture, performer friends," she says. "I was taken with the way he presented them and the way he painted flesh, more than anything." Later, she learned that Assael was to teach a workshop at the New York Academy of Art, so she joined the class, then became his apprentice and assistant in his New York City studio, running his private classes and studying with him for two years. Freymuth-Frazier continues, "Steven is a kind task master and an excellent teacher and mentor. I would never have become as technically adept as I did if it weren't for his high, and ultimately unattainable, standards. He opened my eyes to the world of vibrant color that can be found in so many places, once you learn to see it. I think I've taken this love of bold color further into my work than almost anything else I've learned from him. It spoke to my slightly bubblegum, raised-in-California in the '90s aesthetic, and I ran with it."

The second of her mentors was the extraordinary kitsch-painter Odd Nerdrum, whose controversial paintings exploded into the American art world with apocalyptic intensity in the 1990s. Freymuth-Frazier knew about Nerdrum's work before she began studying painting with intention and rigor. In the summer of 2005, she was accepted to the Nerdrum School, which invites selected students to come and apprentice with the master. In the weird and austere beauty of Nerdrum's farm on the edge of the southern tip of Norway, in the summer land where the sun never sets, she watched and learned. Nerdrum's ochre house and barn arose from a long meadow sloping gently toward the sea, where curving rocks sculpted by ancient glaciers ascended calmly from the waves. It was an idyllic experience. Freymuth-Frazier recalled, "We painted or modeled for most of the day and often fished in the North Sea, turned hay, or walked

Fight Or Flight, 2013, oil on linen, 30 x 24", Collection of Anne Finkelman



the strange smooth rocks that hugged the coast." Nerdrum has welcomed hundreds of students to his studio during the past 25 years, and all seem to remember the experience positively, many with warm fondness for the austerity of the barn's bare pine planks and the bohemian spell that seems to linger around the farm, protecting it from the slings and arrows of reality. Freymuth-Frazier continues, "Odd is a magical creature and the world he created in Norway was like a dream, or a living surrealist masterpiece. He didn't directly teach much technique but one could learn a lot just from observing him paint, which he did most days, all day long. The experience was soaking up what one could from watching him work on a large canvas outside amongst miniature ponies being shod or sheep wagging their dirty tails in the meadow. He has a huge collection of art he would excitedly bring out for students to view. Once, he had his entire collection of Käthe Kollwitz brought out and hung because I told him what her work meant to me. I found him to be very warm and generous, and I'm grateful to have experienced that summer in Norway right as I was finishing my training and embarking on a professional career. I will never forget it."

Cheerfully emulating Assael's contemporary portraits of colorful characters, Freymuth-Frazier began creating memorable portraits of fashionable and transitional people, denizens of the



1



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1
Bang For Your Buck, 2023,
oil on linen, 52 x 46"

2
Gone Wild, 2023, oil on
linen, 38 x 58"

3
Boss, 2021, oil on linen,
78 x 40". Collection of
Michele Peterson.



3

hidden burlesque world of New York, who imagined their lives and lived them as they chose. Her crew-cut *Small Game Hunter* was high-cheeked and androgynous and blew bubbles from a gilded pistol, the quintessential American symbol of macho, a tabby cat sprawled across their shoulders and the collar of a blue silk shirt both belying brute bravado. *Fight or Flight* put a naked and beautiful blonde model into a pilot's leather skullcap, as an Amelia Earheart of the oily air, protected by three crop-eared pit bulls, ready for action. Both paintings took the sting from conventional stereotypes. Manly? Not much, but beautifully bohemian and alluring, sure. Sexy? Yes, but defended and intrepid, too.

Her recent work *Bang For Your Buck* portrays archetypal stripper cowgirls, presenting a pair of the Daisy Dukes of North America's erotic Western culture, which is barely hidden beneath the thin veneer of bourgeois respectability. A cheerful and honest sexuality is a consistent theme in her work. "When I first began painting," she says, "I was seeking a sort of ownership of that early experience of being a young woman who, like most of my peers, felt objectified and overly sexualized by the world we were living in. As I've gotten older, my work continues to be influenced by my experiences and those of my female friends as we pass through different stages of our lives." A feminist theme underlies eros. In *Boss Apple Peeler*, Freymuth-Frazier paints herself as an archetypal Eve, reimagining the biblical character as a contemporary woman, shaded under Marlowe's fedora and customary cigarette. This gumshoe Eve peels the fruit, unwinding the skin as if uncovering preconceptions about her role, deciphering the puzzle of women's identity—did Eve know what she was doing when she gave Adam the primordial apple? Or was hers a thoughtful act, deliberately preferring the challenges of individuality and freedom of choice brought by knowledge of good and evil to the ignorance and bliss of living life in subordinate obedience? A few centuries ago, these ideas would have led to a heresy trial—now, amid the chaos of post-modernity they seem like a reasonable investigation. What are Western women's roles in the new era?

Recently, Freymuth-Frazier has enjoyed further role playing in a series of pictures of a woman reclining on a psychoanalyst's couch. Although the weight and interpretation of the paintings is deeply embedded in the maze of the modern mind, the paintings are lighthearted and charming, and thoroughly collectible. In *Gone Wild* she presents herself as a cowgirl. The couch is draped with an American flag, and another cowgirl takes the notes of a psychoanalyst, while stars fly and a diminutive pistolera, side-saddle on a



4
Painted Ladies, 2018,
oil on linen, 34 x 54"
Bennett Collection of
Women Realists.

5
Gone Fishing, 2018,
oil on linen, 34 x 54".
Collection of Ira and
Carol Goldstein.

6
Inner Space, oil on linen,
2019, 34 x 54". Collection
of Milane Duncan Frantz.

7
Self-Made, 2019, oil on
linen, 34 x 54". Collection
of Sarah and Mike
Cohen.

8
Midlife Madonna, 2020,
oil on linen, 56 x 34"

4



5



6

rearing stallion, fires a six-shooter on the arm of the archetypal couch, naked, but for boots and neckerchief and 20-gallon hat. In others she is an intrepid spacewoman, a lounge-lizard. They are amusing, and they remind us of children playing dress-up and Halloween parties and performance. But there also are serious themes tucked into the paintings, which are allegories questioning personality, whose roots are far from the superficialities of cosplay. We are imperfect actors on the stage. How do we present selfhood? The figures on the psychoanalyst's couch are all different versions of the same person, presenting the idea that an individual may be perceived in many different roles. Freymuth-Frazier explains, "The couch paintings are cheekily inspired by psychoanalysis and loosely based on Freud's theory of personality: Id, Ego and Superego. I base each of the three figures on myself, so in that sense they can be called self-portraits. The central figure (Ego) reclines on the couch which represents the conscious mind. She is having a conversation with the therapist (Superego) and a third little figure (Id), who both reside on the periphery of the couch, in the domain of the subconscious mind."

And there is a cat—an inscrutable Egyptian cat, a sacred and divine cat, who is intertwined through the paintings of the many lives of Freymuth-Frazier, who introduces her. "Bun Ra is a pure white, soft as silk, longhair Persian rescued from the mean streets of Giza, Egypt. She is the prettiest, sassiest, most unforgiving little thing. She knows who she is and isn't pretending to be anything else. I admire her otherworldly elegance and grace mixed with



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unapologetic self-confidence, strength and indifference.”

This familiar companion and alter ego travels with her into the liminal world of her paintings. The cowgirl spins a lariat, and Bun Ra looks singularly unimpressed beneath the brim of her little cowboy hat, her yellow eyes gazing at us impassively. When her crimson bobbed mistress becomes a disco astronaut dressed in '60s go-go boots and a fishbowl space helmet, and brandishing a Buck Rogers water-pistol ray gun, Bun Ra wears her own little helmet and looks thoroughly discontented under glass—but she seems more grunted in *Painted Ladies*, even coquettish, for now the scene is properly set in silk-clad bohemia, and Freymuth-Frazier dons to-die-for spike-heeled boots and a Walter White hat, and the props are a palette and brushes, blood-red blooms, a Cabaret monocle and a cigar. Bun Ra is where she belongs. The title is a pun, and the transitory butterflies flutter through the scene reminding us of the brief illusions of this life, and of the fragile matters of love and lovers. With them, Freymuth-Frazier reminds us to read her paintings as allegories. Everything means something, as Shakespeare said, “O, learn to read what silent love hath writ: to hear with eyes belongs to love’s fine wit.” The scattered cards are a royal flush of hearts—the tricky ego has the hidden ace, ready to slip it into the game at any moment, the id is a “ten” but she comes in the company of two formidable Great Danes, the big black dogs of mental darkness. Costumed Freymuth-Frazier holds the king and the jack in her hand and she has her bouquet of brushes and flowers—so Rose is a rose of love, but Bun Ra is the queen of hearts. ●

*Michael Pearce is a dynamic writer, curator, and critic, and a champion of art that emerges from popular culture and shapes the spirit of the age. He has published dozens of articles about art and artists, and is author of *Kitsch*, *Propaganda*, and *the American Avant-Garde*. He is Professor of Art at California Lutheran University.*

CONTINUITY *and* CONNECTION

Contemporary Santa Fe and Taos artists carry on the creative legacy that took root in the region over a century ago

BY JOHN O'HERN

The art colonies in Santa Fe and Taos, New Mexico, began over 100 years ago. The tradition of loose associations of artists and individuals continues today.

Zienna Brunsted Stewart grew up in Crestone, Colorado, came to Santa Fe with her boyfriend and, essentially, never left. The area's history, its contemporary artists and meeting her mentor, Michael Bergt, have encouraged her to flourish. She not only paints the female figure, but she's also a model. One artist introduced her to the work of Odd Nerdrum and suggested that she should

study with him. "I was looking through one of his books," she says, "and thought 'this is really cool.' I didn't even know who he was but I wrote him a letter and many months later his wife sent me an email asking me if I wanted to go to Norway. I had the feeling that this was what I needed to do."

Wise for her age, she studied with Nerdrum for seven weeks. "That was intentional," she explains. "I knew that if I stayed for six months I was going to come out painting just like him. So I wanted to go and absorb as much as possible and be able to walk away with my own point of view intact."



Zienna Brunsted Stewart, *Adobe*, oil on cradled panel, 16 x 24". Courtesy Keep Contemporary, Santa Fe, NM

Stewart paints the female body as it is in nature, not as in the idealized, porcelain-skinned paintings of the past. Although initially drawn to classical painting, she began painting figures in water to encourage herself to paint more expressively and abstractly while staying representational. "I want to leave some space for your brain to fill in," she explains. Her tiny, four-by-four inch *Girl, Smiling* (study) demonstrates her freeing up. The painting *Adobe*, incorporates her representational prowess in the figure against a painterly rendition of a weathered and textured Santa Fe adobe wall.

Speaking of being a woman painting women, she refers to a quote from the critic John Berger in his book *Ways of Seeing*: "Men act and women appear. Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at. This determines not only most relations between men and women but also the relation of women to themselves. The surveyor of woman in herself is male: the surveyed is female. Thus she turns herself into an object of vision: a sight."

Stewart sometimes hears viewers of her paintings say things like, "Well, if you're a woman who's painting women nude, well, you're just pandering to the male gaze."



Zienna Brunsted Stewart, *Girl, Smiling* (study), oil on panel, 4 x 4"



Jesus Miguel Avena, *Tu puedes ser un coyote, mi hijo (You Can be a Coyote, my Son)*, 2023, oil on panel with ceramic red earthenware frame, 31 1/4 x 55"



Jesus Miguel Avena in his studio.

You have the male gaze inside of you." And she thinks, "Okay. Eye roll."

"When I'm together with other women," she continues, "No one looks at us and thinks, 'she's looking sexy' or 'she's not looking sexy.' It doesn't matter. We can just be ourselves—completely ourselves."

Jesus Miguel Avena is a Mexican-American student at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe. His recent work combines oil paintings with red earthenware frames which he describes as "melancholic paintings of people and

fantastical characters in desert scenes to understand and represent these aspects of cultural, sexual and racial identity as a Mexican-American."

In *De otros colores, seya la media naranja* (Of Other Colors, be the Better Half) he and his partner embrace in the arid desert. Their closeness and energy provides the shade to nurture the growth of tropical plants. His partner had remarked that he was going to come back as a blue bird so that whenever Avena saw the bird, he would see him. The two birds flying above them represent their subconscious.

Referring to his own duality of being both Mexican and American, he brings in aspects of Mesoamerican duality/dichotomy. The Aztec words for fire and water, for instance, when combined, become the word for war, the two words representing a life force but when combined, it represents destruction.

On the ceramic frame is a representation of the Aztec Earth Lady, Tlaltecuhli. In the Aztec creation story, the gods Quetzalcoatl and Tezcatlipoca, who took the form of snakes, battle with Tlaltecuhli, tearing her in half—her lower body becoming the earth and her upper body, the sky.

A snake also figures in his painting *Tu puedes ser un coyote, mi hijo* (You can be a Coyote, my Son) in which Avena appears as a young man and as his older self. Borrowing from Mediterranean

mythology, he has the serpent recall Cassandra whose was able to hear the future after a serpent licked her ear. Cursed by Apollo, her fate was that her prophecies would not be believed.



Jesus Miguel Avena, *De otros colores, seya la media naranja (Of Other Colors, be the Better Half)*, 2023, oil on panel with ceramic red earthenware frame, 29 x 19 1/4"



Nathan Mellott, *Raven (Chiricahua Apache) with two Theatre Masks*, 2024, pastel and watercolor on paper, 15 x 21"



Nathan Mellott, *Sunset Blvd*, oil on canvas, 48 x 36"

The older self advises his younger self in the title of the painting and in the presence of a coyote—a term used for those who smuggle people across the border. Young Avena sees that “the border situation is like a hopeless cause. It’s like you’re screaming out into the wind.” Behind him is an ubiquitous Mexican rural chapel dedicated to St. Jude, the patron of hopeless causes.

In the center, a large cactus is in the shape of Mexico before it ceded lands to the United States. In the distance, the cactus becomes the border wall.

He says, “My portrait and figurative paintings explore human embodiment, contrary to the human condition in personifying the internal dialogues on race, culture and sexuality. Ceramic components amplify thematic ideas of historical and cultural aspects of the Chicano/a/x life and aesthetics. Amalgamating earthenware material with figurative paintings represents my mixed cultural lineage and animates my psychological landscape. My consciousness incorporates the transformative concept of *Nepantla* as a space of ‘in-betweenness.’”

Nathan Mellott is a peripatetic artist dipping into cultures around the world. He says, “I paint to express what I haven’t seen elsewhere. There has been a lot of experimentation but through it runs an intention to share beauty as opposed to nihilism.”

He explains, “My painting *Sunset Blvd* is a portrait of a place. The people are invented as representative of its moods. This was the tenants’ pool for the hotel where I lived in West Hollywood. It was luxurious, libertine and listless. It was somewhat alien but sun-soaked and beautiful.

“Northern New Mexico has influenced



Nathan Mellott sketches ideas for future paintings.



John Hayduk, *Valles Caldera 2*, 2024, oil on panel, 10 x 12"

my figures and the space they inhabit, both interiors and exteriors, inventions and paintings from life," he continues. "With *Sunset Blvd*, the standing figure is monolithic, the other relaxed, both inhabiting deep-time. This is a tie to New Mexico.

Some consider New Mexico the center of the world. Here there is a conjunction of ancient and modern themes: nuclear power and pre-Columbian nations; godlike scientific ambitions in our labs and institutions, the country's oldest "living" cultures, and petroglyphs by those forgotten; militancy, shamanism, poverty, and luxury abound - humble humans and their celestial aims.

Mellot has known Raven over the

years and recently produced a new portrait. "Raven's portrait began to take shape after capturing his expression, it conveyed strength and humility well," he says. "I wanted to present this nobility of character as mythic or as an honor to his inner god. Raven (Chiricahua Apache) is a popular model in Santa Fe with a strong personality. For artists, he welcomes their plurality of observations—and he is reliable. His portraits, like New Mexico, are a crossroads of ideas. In mine, the halo and comets elevate his standing while the theatre masks represent complexity of the inner life. These motifs I carried away from another timeless place—Italy. They

were inspired by a fresco in Bari, a marble letterbox in Carrara, a statue in Rome and a painting in Florence."

John Hayduk hails from Connecticut where he developed an early interest in painting the figure. "I knew I loved realism," he says, "The human body has always fascinated me, especially since I was a personal trainer. I knew I wanted to do figurative work." He discovered the Academy of Realist Art Boston which introduced him to the 19th-century atelier system of the French academies. While at the academy he heard of Tony Ryder and the Ryder Studio in Santa Fe and one of its instructors, M. Tobias (Toby) Hall.



John Hayduk paints en plein air.

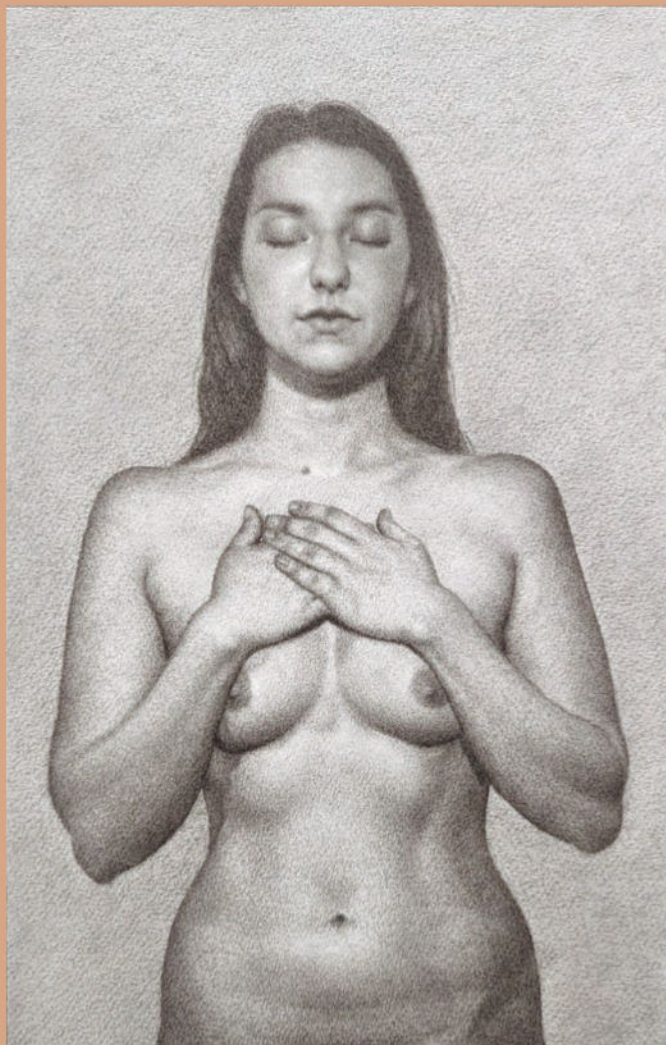
Six years ago he packed up his car and drove to Santa Fe, thinking he'd stay for a few months. "I was very lucky with the people I met and just instantly had this art community that's been a huge part of me staying out here," he says "He studied at The Ryder Studio for two years and then attended part time. Recently he has been painting with Toby Hall, transitioning gradually into plein air landscape paintings.

Ten years, ago, however, he was diagnosed with a non-specific motor neuron disease which brought the possibility of his being in a wheelchair and living only for a few more years. The experts he consults, notably at Duke University, now say more simply that "something's wrong with your muscles" and the disease is progressing very slowly.

He does have periodic tremors in his hands but he has learned to use the tools of his trade to continue to paint. Painters use a mahl stick with a padded end to support their hand and brush. Hayduk has brought it to further use by grasping it to have more control when he's experiencing tremors.

He has begun a series of memento mori drawings, from the Latin "remember, you must die," with healthy figures standing with their arms crossed as if laid in a coffin. "The aspect of the healthy body comes from an outside perspective," he explains. "Throughout the day, nobody would think that anything was happening to me or that I was facing and thinking about this sort of thing.

"My *Memento Mori* series focuses on the idea of facing one's mortality but I have been thinking about why I have become so drawn in by landscape painting and



John Hayduk, *Memento Mori 2*, pencil on paper, 12 x 10"

what the connection is there. Life and death is constantly surrounding us; death seems to come slowly from the human viewpoint until it is standing right in front of us. Being immersed in a landscape and the changing seasons allows us to see the coming and going of life and death at different rates. I can paint in one spot all year and see life, death and rebirth. Spring brings fresh buds and new life while winter sees the last leaves fall and the color drain from the plant life. Both are uniquely beautiful but there is something special in the darkness of winter to me. There is hope in

knowing that new life is to come and the lack of color in the landscape brings the focus to the beautifully cool light of the winter sun. Landscape painting for me isn't as simple as capturing nature's beauty, it's a meditation on life and death and seeing the beauty in both.

His recent painting *Valles Caldera 2* depicts a meadow and mountains in the Jemez mountains formed by a cataclysmic volcanic eruption. A slash of sunlight shines through the overcast, bringing life and hope. ●

The Art of Authenticity



CALIFORNIA CREATIVES
COLLABORATE TO MAKE A FILM
ABOUT ARTISTS BY ARTISTS.

BY SARAH GIANELLI

1 Paul painting a portrait of Annabelle in the studio. Painting by artist Derek Harrison.

2 Derek Harrison, *Annabelle*, oil, 36 x 24". Created specifically for *Movement, Light, and Life*.

In March of 2023, Winston Stemler was looking for inspiration for his next film project and decided to visit the Getty Museum. He didn't have anything specific in mind but he had always been intrigued by the idea of filming a love story inside a museum. Wandering around, he stumbled upon an exhibition of the French Impressionists. He was stopped in his tracks by one painting in particular—Renoir's *La Promenade*, which depicts a young couple walking along a forest path holding hands.

"To me this is the seed of the short film," says Stemler, who wrote and directed *Movement, Light, and Life*, scheduled for release this month. "As soon as

I saw this painting, I knew that I wanted to capture all its qualities—its setting, its painterliness and the romance between the two characters."

As he did further research on the painting, he learned that the model for the female subject was Lise Tréhot, who was not only a friend and muse of Renoir, but a talented painter in her own right. Drawing from this idea, Stemler decided to approach his period piece with a modern sensibility and made the female artist the more talented of the two.

The film is set in 1889. A young impressionist painter, Paul Lefay (played by Isaac Jay), is tasked by the Académie des Beaux-Arts to complete his first commission. Searching for a muse to inspire his greatest painting yet, Paul journeys to the French countryside where he spots the radiant Annabelle





2

Veilleux (played by Caledonia Wilson) painting masterfully along a riverbank. What follows is a passionate tale of love, drama and the transformative power of art.

Once the story solidified, it became clear to Stemler that he would need a fair amount of paintings for the film, as well as artist-consultants to ensure all aspects of the film reflected the time period with historical accuracy.

He ended up connecting with Vanessa Rothe, an artist and gallerist in Laguna Beach, California, whose area of expertise—both in practice and knowledge—is French and American impressionism. They transported Rothe's entire studio to the craftsman-style Los Angeles home where the interior scenes were shot. But to recreate a late 19th-century artist studio many details had to be altered—the metal knobs on Rothe's easel had to be covered up; canvas staples were replaced by brass tacks. Stretchers had to be built out of old wood. Tubes of paint were swapped out



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for the small vessels artists of the day would have used to mix their powdered pigments and oil.

Stemler explains, “If you think about the film as a metaphor for a canvas, maintaining these little details and authenticity makes it feel like every brush on the canvas holds a certain weight; everything feels deliberate. If you look at a painting by any of the masters, even if your eye can’t see each and every brushstroke, on a subconscious level you pick up on all the hours of work and emotion that went into it. I’m about the belief that if you try to fake a painting, the viewer can tell something is off, or a corner was cut. The same, I think, is true of film.”

The decision to use original paintings by five contemporary California artists on the set—several of which were commissioned specifically for the project—elevates *Movement, Light, and Life* to another level of authenticity, earning its tagline as “a film about artists by artists”.

Rothe, who provided some important original oil paintings for the film, further recommended artists Derek Harrison, Ray Roberts, Cheryl Kline and Sharon Weaver to lend or donate existing works, or paint new ones specifically for the film—amounting to 100 pieces

in all. What’s more, a large selection of the artwork in the film is available for sale on the film’s website.

Trained in the distinct styles of the fictional artists—landscapes and portraiture—Rothe created works for both characters, in addition to a floral still life for the set. “They borrowed work from my Laguna College of Art and Design days with classical realism, and limited palette of colors and indirect method for the character Paul,” shares Rothe. “In contrast, my regular plein air on-location paintings are much more colorful and impressionistic, created in the direct alla prima method, and those were used to represent Annabelle’s works in the studio. I was so honored they used both styles of my work, for each character.”

Harrison was also responsible for painting figurative works for the male lead in the film. The actors came to the LA Academy of Figurative Art where Harrison teaches, to get a glimpse into the world of realist art; and the female lead modeled for him in full period dress. The male lead works intensely on the painting throughout the film so it was left partially unfinished to fit with the narrative. “Nineteenth-century academic art is my main inspiration,” says Harrison. “Creating a timeless and carefully crafted representational

3 Paul sits at his easel inside the 19th-century studio decorated with work by Derek Harrison, Cheryl Kline, Ray Roberts, Vanessa Rothe and Sharon Weaver.

4 Paul at the easel, behind the scenes on set of the short film *Movement, Light, and Life*.

5 Annabelle painting in plein air. Original painting by Sharon Weaver created specifically for *Movement, Light, and Life*.



6

6 A pivotal moment in the film, Paul finds the painting Annabelle has left him titled *Movement, Light and Life*, created specifically for the film by Cheryl Kline.

7 Paul and Annabelle painting a large landscape, on location, side by side.

8 **Derek Harrison**, *Faceless Woman*, oil, 24 x 48". Created specifically for *Movement, Light, and Life*.

9 A recreation of a 19th-century artist studio decorated with original art work by Derek Harrison, Cheryl Kline, Ray Roberts, Vanessa Rothe and Sharon Weaver.



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painting is exactly what I do. This made for a very suitable fit."

Weaver's landscape *Reflections Remembered* appears in the scene when the main characters first meet along the riverbank. Loosely implied to be somewhere in rural France, all the exterior scenes were filmed in Yosemite National Park. "She is an adventurous woman who is painting in plain air and on her easel is my painting," says Weaver. "In the background you can see the actual scene that I painted.

The male character sees her across the river. At that time, women rarely painted on location so she makes an impression. I too have been inspired by those early plein air artists and have taken many trips into remote locations. One was a pack trip into Ediza Lake where I rode in by mule and camped with no running water for six days to paint where Edgar Payne did."

Kline was asked to create a piece of the main actors walking into a beautiful field with trees, as seen from behind. For

historical reference, she used paintings by Degas, Manet and others but it was Monet's *Woman with a Parasol* she found invaluable. "My task was to create a piece important to the storytelling," explains Kline. "It had to be impressionistic; it had to look like the same artist created this one as well as another one painted by my colleague Sharon Weaver. Winston was pretty clear on what he needed—my job was to translate his direction into a believable painting."

Movement, Light, and Life wrapped on February 29 and one of the highlights of the project for Stemler came on the very last day of filming.

"After a full week of shooting, travel and long hours, we arrived at our final set piece," recalls Stemler. "With mountains stretching as far as the eye could see and the warm sunset over our heads, like the heartfelt story of our painters, our film was almost complete. We were just one brushstroke away..."

Running close to 15 minutes, *Movement Light, and Life* is currently being considered by dozens of independent film festivals. The film's first industry screening will take place 7 p.m. Saturday, May 11, at the American Film Institute in Hollywood, California, with many more events on the horizon. For the latest updates and to view the available works for sale visit www.movementlightandlife.com. ●



9

ROOM TO



Aneka Gold, *Serenity*, mixed media on panel, 12 x 12"

GROW

The Bennett Prize winners reflect on the impact the award has had on their artistic trajectories

BY SARAH GIANELLI

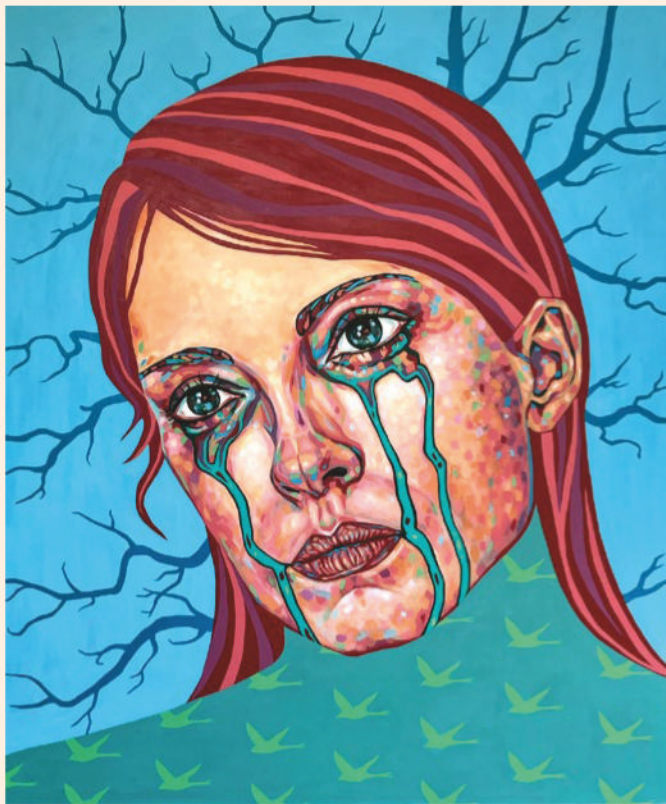


As we routinely cover the Bennett Prize finalists, winners and associated exhibitions, by now most of our readers probably know that the award, endowed by art collectors Steven Alan Bennett and Dr. Elaine Melotti Schmidt at the Pittsburgh Foundation, aims to help women figurative realist painters realize their full potential for professional recognition. The winner receives \$25,000 each year for two years, during which time she focuses on creating a new body of work for a solo show.

Since its inception, there have been three recipients of the bi-annual Bennett Prize. Aneka Ingold won the inaugural award in 2019; followed by Ayana Ross in 2021 and, most recent to join their ranks, Shiqing (Demo) Deng, in 2023.

All three artists are at different stages of receiving the Bennett Prize. Ingold has completed the cycle of the award; Ross' solo show is currently traveling with the work by the 10 finalists announced in 2023; and Deng is creating the paintings for her show that will travel with the 10 finalists that will be announced in May 2025.

According to the Bennett Prize website, "the 18 finalists and two winners have seen up to a 45 percent increase in prices they are able to command for their work, more than 100 paintings sold, eight gallery representations, 19 solo shows and 46 group shows [and]...have been featured in more than 30 published stories, 250 advertise-



Aneka Gold, *Melancholia*, acrylic on panel, 48 x 40"

ments and in 2,500 social media posts."

We thought we'd check in with Deng, Ross and Ingold and ask about the impact that receiving the Bennett Prize has had on their careers thus far.

Deng was announced the winner of the Bennett Prize 3.0 in May of 2023, and is already enjoying the opportunity to pursue her art full time. Educated in her native China and in New York, where she currently resides in Brooklyn, Deng has been applying the funds she has received to rent, art supplies and to travel to museums in other parts of the country. She says the most important freedom it has afforded her is to "keep expanding and exploring; and not think about the art market and if the work is easy to sell."

The two works featured here are part of Deng's new *Forgery* series, another body of work that explores a hot topic in the art world—the questionable authenticity of da Vinci's *Salvator Mundi* and a similar story involving one of Van Gogh's sunflower paintings.

Already feeling more open and confident as an artist, looking to the future, Deng says, "For me I wish to be an artist who never repeats myself, and always remains curious and sensitive to my surroundings. I was not expecting my work to be like this five years ago, so I hope in the future my work is still not predictable."

After being part of the finalist exhibition that toured with Ingold's solo exhibition, Ross now has her own solo exhibition, *Lessons I Leave You*, that is traveling in tandem with the *Rising Voices II* group exhibition featuring the 2023 finalists. Touring since May 2023, both exhibitions are currently on view at Customs House: Museum & Cultural Center in Clarksville, Tennessee, through April 21.

"Being a finalist and ultimately winning the Bennett Prize has had a huge impact on the trajectory of my career," says Ross. "It has given me the support needed to grow and expand in my work and ultimately allowed my art to be more visible on a broader scale, elevating me to a different



Ayana Ross, *The Pioneer Woman*, oil on canvas, 40 x 30"



Ayana Ross headshot

playing field. This has been especially important for getting my work into the right spaces so that I can continue to tell the stories that need to be told.”

Practically speaking, she used the funds for studio space, supplies and as a cushion while transitioning into being a full-time artist. “Most importantly, I used the funds to give myself time to focus and build a body of work that I would be proud of,” she adds.

Ross wouldn’t say her work has changed per se, but rather has expanded. “I have taken the narratives behind my work and developed them further than I have in the past,” she says. “I have begun to find ways to layer information related in the paintings that connect the past to the present and hopefully deliver art that is not just aesthetically pleasing, but also has something important to say.”

Currently a Mellon Arts and Practitioner Fellow at the Yale Center for the Study of Race, Indigeneity and Transnational Migration (RITM), she is currently working on a few pieces for the fellowship’s April showcase.

“*The Pioneer Woman* represents so many women who have paved the way into new territory,” says Ross. “In this particular instance, leaving the South and settling into a new city further north to build a life and a home for herself and those who would soon follow. The details illustrated on her housecoat give additional insight into her story and family history. While this pioneer woman can sit with satisfac-



Ayana Ross, *Remember Me*, oil on canvas, 40 x 30"

tion as she reflects upon her life’s journey, we are reminded of the courage it must have taken to embark upon an uncharted path into something new.

“*Remember Me*,” she continues, “is a reflection on those places—which for me is South Georgia—our parents and grandparents are from, the places we spent our childhood, our summers. The places we only seem to return to for funerals.”

Prior to receiving the Bennett Prize, Ross had a fairly consistent sales record and her work was beginning to have broader exposure, but she was still trying to figure out how to make that final leap into becoming a full-time painter. “Now, I am where I wanted to be, with an exhibition schedule, and just enjoying the journey,” she says. “As I look towards the future I am still looking at ways to continue to expand in my practice and working to see my work in some of my dream spaces. However, at the same time I continue to be amazed by the opportunities that come my way, so my focus is to simply do the work and let God

take care of the rest. My goal is to make good and meaningful art and anything that comes after that is icing on the cake.”

Ross also currently has a solo exhibition at the Reading Public Museum in Reading, Pennsylvania, through June 2.

Having fully moved through all the phases of the Bennett Prize, Ingold has the benefit of the most hindsight and additional time for the residual effects of the award to continue to pile up.

Ingold says she’s received a lot more attention on social media and has been invited to participate in shows, be a guest lecturer at universities and art centers, be featured in numerous art publications and has gained representation by RJD Gallery in Romeo, Michigan. “It’s really exciting to be in a place where venues seek me out rather than the other way around,” she says. “It can take so much time and energy and money to do the searches and put yourself out there. It’s very satisfying to feel like some of that hard work paid off.”

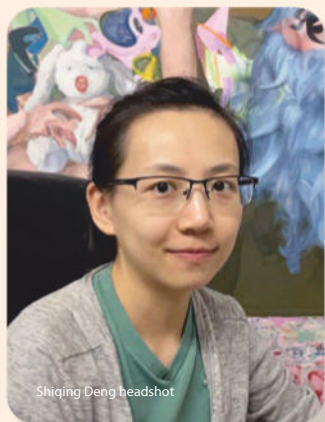
The funding came in handy both



Shiqing Deng, *Busted*, oil on linen, 54 x 70"



Shiqing Deng, *Salvator Mundi*, oil on linen, 58 x 72"



Shiqing Deng headshot

in terms of realizing her solo show *Transfiguration*, and in getting her through a difficult divorce during Covid. "As a newly single mom with two kids I was struggling to support myself and the grant money was definitely integral in my survival," she says. "I was able to refinance and keep the house my kids and I were living in, and additionally keep my home art studio. I'm infinitely grateful for the ability to stay close to friends and neighbors who were part of my support system and continue to make and exhibit art during such a hard time."

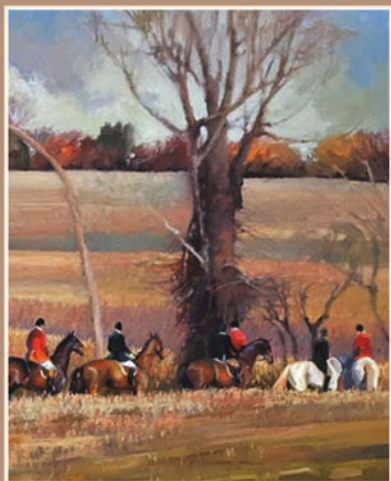
Ingold worked on *Melancholia* for much of 2023 while facing a series of challenges with her aging parents. "This self-portrait was a catharsis for me as I watched those I love suffer, and even though I suffered with them I still found a way to rely on my inner strength to surmount the internal

fears I had," she says. The piece is exclusively acrylic, a departure from her typical use of mixed-media and, at 48-by-40 inches, her largest portrait to date. On the other end of the spectrum is a recently completed foot-square piece titled *Serenity*, the beginning of a new series of portraits of women that could be perceived as both historical and contemporary.

"I feel increasingly validated that the work I make is relevant," says Ingold. "That confrontational work about women's experiences is being recognized and rewarded. I feel inspired to never stop dreaming and hoping for change in the art world for women. The Bennett Prize has so successfully supported and promoted female painters that take risks in their work and give insight into uniquely female perspectives." ●

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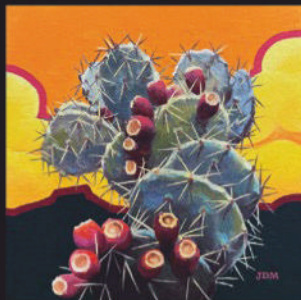
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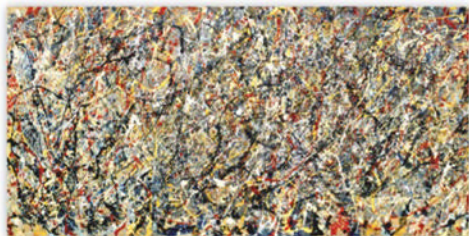
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COLLECTING FINE ART IN**

SANTA FE



Raymond Jonson (1891-1982), *Arroyo #4*, 1922, oil on canvas board, 15 x 24¼"

The City Different

Santa Fe is a haven for the arts, a Southwestern tradition that goes back centuries.

BY JOHN O'HERN

When Carlos Vierra (1876-1937) arrived in Santa Fe, New Mexico, in 1904, he wrote to his sister, "The people in this part of the country have about as much use for an artist as their burros have for a fiddler's midsummer night's dream." He told his mother, "I expect to stay here two or three months." Vierra became the first resident Anglo artist in Santa Fe, running a photo studio on the plaza, pursuing his

painting and advocating for the preservation of historic architecture.

An 1883 etching by Peter Moran (1841-1914), illustrates what Santa Fe may still have looked like, 20 years later when Vierra arrived.

Vierra was joined by other artists who came to Santa Fe not for the light, color and history, but for the salubrious environment as the region became a mecca for the treatment of tuberculosis. Fresh air was the therapy of choice before antibiotics were invented.



Mabel Dodge Luhan's home
in Taos. Courtesy New Mexico
Tourism Department.



The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Photography Collection, The New York Public Library.
"The plaza, Santa Fe, New Mexico." The New York Public Library Digital Collections. 1850-1930.



Emil Bisttram
(1895–1976),
New Mexico
Compound with
Poplar, ca. 1950,
watercolor on
paper, 17½ x
23¾". Courtesy
The Owings
Gallery, Santa
Fe, NM.

Soon, Gerald Cassidy, Sheldon Parsons and Kenneth Chapman arrived for the same reason. Cassidy's wife, Ina Sizer Cassidy, noted at the time, that Santa Fe had "no paved streets, no automobiles, and one sewer line...A passenger could ride all over town in a horse-drawn taxi for a quarter."

Edgar Lee Hewett (1865–1946) came to Santa Fe with his wife, Cora, for relief from tuberculosis. An extraordinary figure in the history of art and archaeology of New Mexico, Hewett was a cultural entrepreneur who founded the Museum of New Mexico in 1909. He offered the recovering artists studio space, exhibitions and jobs.

In her book *From Humble Village to Cultural Center: The Birth and Growth of Santa Fe's Art Community*, Stacia Lewandowski writes, "Particularly interesting to discover is how the artists responded to the Santa Fe environment once they arrived. Some were enraptured for a lifetime. Others found the city engaging for a limited period, while there were those whose stay was brief because they were not convinced it served their artistic needs. Those who found the environment captivating, however, responded with a visceral enthusiasm that spilled over into the life of the city. These artists became energetic, visible members of the community—activists as well as neighbors—who provided varied expertise, assistance, and highly entertaining



Peter Moran (1841–1914), *Santa Fe*, 1883, etching in black on wove paper, 4½ x 6¾". National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Reba and Dave Williams Collection. Gift of Reba and Dave Williams.

diversions. As a result, their influence seeped into the city culture and created an atmosphere attentive to the arts."

A highlight of her book is a pamphlet describing walking tours of artists' homes in Santa Fe.

The *Armory Show*, officially the *International Exhibition of Modern Art*, shocked the country when it opened in New York in 1913. It showed the works of European modernists for the first time in



John Sloan (1871-1951), *Travelling Carnival, Santa Fe*, 1924, oil on canvas, 30 1/8 x 36 1/8". Smithsonian American Art Museum. Gift of Mrs. Cyrus McCormick, 1972.149.

this country along with the more avant-garde of American artists. Mabel Dodge Luhan (1879-1962) wrote to the board of the *Armory Show*, "I'll be delighted to help in any way with the exhibition, because I think it is the most important thing that ever happened in America, of its kind. Anything that will extend the unawakened consciousness here (or elsewhere) will have my support...The majorities are content to browse upon past achievements. What is needed is more, more and always more consciousness, both in art and in life."

Mabel moved to Taos in 1918 and brought modernism with her, inviting artists to visit. Many of them stayed.

Raymond Jonson (1891-1982) had seen the paintings of Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944) at the *Armory Show* and was inspired by Kandinsky's book *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*. Kandinsky wrote, "Color directly influences the soul. Color is the keyboard, the eyes are the hammers, the soul is the

piano with many strings. The artist is the hand that plays, touching one key or another purposively, to cause vibrations in the soul."

Jonson had visited Santa Fe on a sketching trip and returned permanently in 1925, determined to make his paintings "an expression of sensation, rather than as a reflection of environmental appearances." In 1938, he and a group of other artists formed the Transcendental Painting Group "to carry painting beyond the appearance of the physical world, through new concepts of space, color, light, and design."

Santa Fe has always entertained a mix of cultures from those of the many pueblos, to the blending of Spanish and Mexican influences, to those who brought different ideas from the East and from the West.

P.A. Nisbet moved to the Southwest in 1980 and began renting a studio on Garcia Street in Santa Fe in 1995. John Sloan built the studio in 1922. It was the site of Sloan's painting and partying for four months each



P.A. Nisbet, *High Desert Dawn*, oil on canvas, 20 x 32". Courtesy Meyer Gallery, Santa Fe, NM.

summer for nearly 30 years. Nisbet's painting, *High Desert Dawn*, depicts one of the many extraordinary moments of sun, clouds and landscapes in northern New Mexico—and its challenges for the artist. Nisbet writes, "The dawn comes up playing a crescendo! In truth, a painting cannot really capture the intensity of color that spreads before the astonished eye. On canvas, the reds and yellows are by necessity dull compared to the real transmitted brilliance of a New Mexico sunrise. Attempting it in paint is a kind of celebration and also a forgiving nod to the limitations of pigment."

Artists who have mastered their craft and have expressed their ideas through innovation have always been at the top of the market in Santa Fe. Native American and Hispanic art maintains traditions but there have always been innovators. Painters and sculptors of the American West complement the older traditions. All are represented in over 250 galleries across the city in areas such as Canyon Road, the Santa Fe Plaza and the Railyard. Most galleries are in converted homes or shops and galleries in the Railyard have been purpose-built.

Leroy Garcia began selling art in the second floor of his family's home in Taos. At that time, he sold primarily art made by his cousins and other family members. Thirty-one years later Blue Rain Gallery in the Railyard (with a branch in Durango, Colorado) is a world-class gallery. A fortuitous acquisition of

a collection of high-quality Native pots, and his recognizing the future of art glass when he first saw the work of Preston Singletary in 1998 have complemented his own eclectic interests. He also recognized the importance of the pottery of Tammy Garcia who "used the entire surface of the pot, unlike many people before her," he notes. "Nancy and Nathan [Youngblood] were doing that but with different designs and imagery."

Garcia continues, "Another development in Native art is fashion. The artists are designers and are looking for a new canvas for their designs. It's a completely natural fit." Across the spectrum of art offered at Blue Rain, Garcia insists on innovation and refinement, qualities that are found in all of Santa Fe's best galleries.

With the arrival of the Internet and social media, the gallery world began to change. It found new ways "to invest in the artists, to help them grow and to protect their prices," according to Garcia. The arrival of Covid spurred another major adjustment when galleries closed to foot traffic and had to find other ways to promote their artists to collectors and to the general public.

As Santa Fe galleries evolve and adjust to fluctuations in the market, Garcia sees one thing remaining constant: "Santa Fe has held its place because of the aesthetic of natural light that has always brought artists here. There is a treasure trove of imagery to paint." ●



1



2

BLUE RAIN GALLERY

544 S. Guadalupe Street
Santa Fe, NM 87501, (505) 954-9902
info@blueraingallery.com
www.blueraingallery.com

With a prime location in the Santa Fe Railyard, Blue Rain Gallery represents established contemporary artists working in a variety of mediums that include paintings, glass and bronze sculptures, pottery and jewelry. The gallery is eclectic in its approach, yet maintains a special focus on regional, Western, Native American and studio glass art, and features celebrated artists like Preston Singletary, Kathryn Stedham, Jim Vogel, Billy Schenck, Roseta Santiago, Dennis Zieminski, Deladier Almeida, Starr Hardridge, Hyrum Joe, Brad Overton, Doug West, Erin Currier and many others.

Blue Rain Gallery is now in its third decade of providing important art to Southwest collectors. With a gallery now in Durango, Colorado, Blue Rain has two locations where visitors can enjoy a thoughtful curation of artworks that



3

embody the essence and aesthetic of Blue Rain's flagship gallery in Santa Fe.

The gallery also hosts regular shows, including

Helen K. Tindel from May 17 to 31, Z.Z. Wei from May 31 to June 14, new glass works from Rik Allen and Shelley Muzylowski Allen from June

14 to 28, and Erin Currier from June 28 to July 13. Check the website for additional show information.

1
Front exterior view of Blue Rain Gallery in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

2
Blue Rain Gallery,
Indian Scout, acrylic on canvas board, 19¼ x 15¼", by Tony de Luz.

3
Blue Rain Gallery,
Big Red Bandana, oil on canvas, 40 x 36", by Dennis Zieminski.



1



2

TOURISM SANTA FE

Santa Fe Community Convention Center
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87501, (800) 777-2489,
www.santafe.org

The diverse and creative city of Santa Fe, New Mexico, has long inspired creators and today, it hosts hundreds of artists, working passionately at their craft, be it pottery, jewelry, painting, textiles, sculpture or photography. The “City Different” is a truly unique destination that proudly carries the international honor of being a UNESCO Creative City for its innovation, investment and community in a range of arts and creativity.

These local artists and others from the region and around the world are represented in Santa Fe’s 250-plus world-class galleries. To fully experience the scene, begin along Canyon Road, one of four classified art districts in the City Different. It’s a half-mile stretch featuring more than 100 galleries ensconced in charming adobe homes. Open a dialogue with a gallery owner to learn about

an artist’s process of working with oils, watercolors, clay or glass. Other hotspots include the downtown area, where visitors can engage directly with the Native American artisans under the portal of the Palace of the Governors nearly every day of the week, rain or shine, and learn about their techniques of working with turquoise and silver.

The more contemporary Rail yard Arts District and the Baca Street Arts District enliven industrial warehouse-style spaces and offer a chance to see artists at work in their studio spaces. Santa Fe also has a concentration of more than 20 important museums. Clustered in and around the Plaza and Museum Hill neighborhoods, opportunities include historic and contemporary works of Native American art and culture, Georgia O’Keeffe, folk art, the history and art of New Mexico, as well as ever-changing and provocative installations by influential artists of today that challenge the viewer to ponder their assumptions about the meaning of life.



3

1 From contemporary art to Native American treasures, Santa Fe has something for every art lover.

2 The Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) is home to one of more than 20 world-class museums in the City Different.

3 Visitors to Santa Fe will find a diverse variety of art in the city’s many historic and contemporary galleries.



SWAIA

(505) 983-5220
members@swaia.org
www.swaia.org

SWAIA's *Santa Fe Indian Market* is the oldest and most prestigious Native North American art show in the world. This honored, juried show includes multiple categories of art in the competitive show, including pottery, diverse arts, two-dimensional art, jewelry, basketry, youth, textiles, bead and quillwork, Pueblo wood carving and sculpture.

The 2024 show, now in its 102nd year, will be held in downtown Santa Fe on August 17 and 18. This year's event will welcome back SWAIA's marquee events like the Best of Show Ceremony and award-winning art previews, along with visitor favorites like the Native American Clothing Contest. The weekend's events include Native American food vendors, multiple dance and musical performances, panel discussions and the new Get Indigenous Film Festival.

All ticketed events will be made public on SWAIA's website, so be sure to check it for updates.



1

1
SWAIA youth artist, Apaolo Benally (Diné). Photo © Gabriella Marks for SWAIA.



2

2
SWAIA artist, basket weaver Carol Emarthle-Douglas (Northern Arapaho-Seminole). Photo © Kitty Leaken for SWAIA.



3

3
Judging taking place for a basket by Jeremy Frey (Passamaquoddy). Photo © Kitty Leaken for SWAIA.



1
Old West Events, High Pass, bronze, 40 x 12 x 23 1/4", by Scott Rogers.

2
Last year's Old West Auction in action.

3
Old West Events, Untitled (Native on Horseback), acrylic on canvas, 11 x 13 1/2", by Mark Maggiori.



2



3

OLD WEST EVENTS

(484) 639-9378, brian@brianlebel.com
www.oldwestevents.com

Old West Events will host *Brian Lebel's 34th Annual Old West Show & Auction* in historic Santa Fe, New Mexico, from June 21 to 23. The anticipated event consists of a weekend vendor sale including more than 100 national dealers exhibiting

some of the finest Western collectibles in the country, as well as an exciting live auction on Saturday night. *Brian Lebel's Old West Show & Auction* is held annually in both Santa Fe and Las Vegas, and are regarded as the premier vendor shows in the Western collecting community.

The *Old West Auctions* hold several records for Western artist Edward Borein and

frequently features work from both contemporary and deceased fine artists such as Will James, Maynard Dixon, Charles M. Russell, Olaf Wieghorst, Nick Eggenhofer, John and Terri Kelly Moyers, Michael Coleman, Eric Michaels, William Moyers, Joe Beeler, Edward S. Curtis, Marjorie Reed and many others. In addition to Western artwork, the auction will feature authentic Western

antiques, cowboy memorabilia and Native American artifacts.

In early 2023, Old West Events joined forces with Morphy Auctions, creating a partnership that will foster the growth of the Western art and collectibles community in both the quality and availability of materials offered, as well as expanding the audience for these unique and historic pieces.



1



2

1
Liquid Light Glass, Purple Vortex Aurora, blown chalcodony glass and forged steel, 38 x 9 x 9", by Elodie Holmes. Photo by Wendy McEahern Photography.

2
Liquid Light Glass, Contorta, blown and hot-sculpted chalcodony glass, 19 x 18 x 14", by Elodie Holmes. Photo by Wendy McEahern Photography.

3
Interior view of Liquid Light Glass.



3

LIQUID LIGHT GLASS

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sales@liquidlightglass.com
www.liquidlightglass.com

Liquid Light Glass Studio and Gallery is located in the heart of Santa Fe, New Mexico. This world class

gallery of glass art features the sculptures of award-winning artist Elodie Holmes. Respected and admired in the artistic community for her technical expertise and unique formulations of glass colors, Holmes's glass and metal sculptures are highly sought after and collected. Her more recent *Fractured Time* series are colorfully abstracted

sculptures on the flow of time, and time's fractured nature that was experienced during the Covid pandemic. The spiraling forms represent the flow of time with a portal that is cut in half and off-set, fractured from the whole.

Being a founding member of the Glass Alliance-New Mexico and the Baca Street Arts District, Holmes and Liquid

Light Glass have become a major focal point in the Santa Fe art scene. Through offering hands-on learning experiences to the public, performing public demonstrations with the top glass artists from around the world and hosting community events, Liquid Light Glass has become a destination gallery that has something for everyone.



1



2

BARBARA MEIKLE FINE ART

236 Delgado Street, Santa Fe, NM
87501, (505) 992-0400
info@meiklefineart.com
www.meiklefineart.com

Experience Barbara Meikle's captivating artistry, a homage to New Mexico's tranquil beauty. A lifelong artist, Meikle's journey from sketching beloved horses, to earning a bachelor's degree in painting and printmaking, led her back to New Mexico in 1990.

Her style, which she describes as "expressive impressionism", infuses emotion into vivid colors, capturing subjects and places with a unique depth. Her limited-edition bronze sculptures feature unique patinas that reflect her emotional response to color and her subjects. Meikle's success empowers her to support local equine

rescues and animal shelters, including the Equine Spirit Sanctuary, Santa Fe Raptor Center, the New Mexico Wildlife Center and the Horse Shelter.

"Join us at the gallery for

one of our annual animal fundraising events," says Meikle. Ambassador birds from the Santa Fe Raptor Center will visit the gallery on Saturday, June 15 from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Therapy

burros from Equine Spirit Sanctuary of Rancho de Taos, New Mexico, pose for portraits on Saturday, July 13 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Meikle will paint portraits of animal models live while offering a limited-edition print release. A portion of all proceeds from the day are donated to the featured organization to continue their rescue and therapy programs.

A variety of colorful artwork is also available in the gallery, including work by local glass artist David Shanfeld, pottery by ceramist Randy O'Brien and oil paintings by local painter Simone B. Silva.



3

1
Barbara Meikle
Fine Art, *A Peaceful
Evening*, oil on
canvas, 24 x 24", by
Barbara Meikle.

2
Barbara Meikle Fine
Art, *Seasonal Spring
near El Rito*, oil on
canvas, 20 x 16", by
Barbara Meikle.

3
Barbara Meikle Fine
Art, *Milagro*, limited
edition bronze with
unique color patina,
16½ x 11 x 22½", by
Barbara Meikle.



1



2

JOHN MEISTER

(505) 235-3213

john@meistergraphics.com

www.johnmeisterart.com

John Meister divides his oil painting production between his Albuquerque studio and painting in plein air. "I consider the New Mexico outdoors the best 'classroom'

for the artist," says Meister. "The term 'magical realism' had to be created for this state. Living here, I appreciate the aesthetic of life, in all its forms, and I gravitate toward smaller intimate views of nature. Life must do a little something extra to thrive here, and sometimes it displays great

beauty in the process. I strive to capture that."

For the past four months, Meister has been focusing on a new style that places a close-up view of his subject, often a cactus, flower or other botanical, in front of a colorful but simple graphic background. "I imagine these subjects as performers in

front of a backdrop," he says. "My hope is that these pieces show my appreciation of the natural form while providing an artistic answer to color."

Meister is represented by Manitou Galleries in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

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Canyon Road Contemporary Art gallery is in its premier new location at 409 Canyon Road in Santa Fe. The gallery features 25-plus artists and offers art enthusiasts an eclectic mix of contemporary art in gemstones, pastel, oil, watercolor, acrylic, mixed media, fused glass, ceramic, as well as aluminum and bronze sculpture. Gallery artists harken from just around the corner and from all over the world, and share their vision with guests and art collectors alike.



3

1
John Meister,
Dignity, oil,
10 x 10"

2
John Meister,
Open to Possibility,
oil, 11 x 14"

3
**Canyon Road
Contemporary
Art, *Beyond the
Horizon***, oil on
canvas, 36 x 45",
by Ed Sandoval.

WILD SPACES

INTRODUCTION BY
CHELSEA KORESSEL



Because humans have been far removed from wild spaces for quite some time, we've also experienced a simultaneous disconnect from the creatures that inhabit them, resulting in a unique dichotomy where we are both charmed and challenged by their presence.

Artists have helped bridge this gap by bringing the public unique ways in which to view our non-human counterparts. They bring wildlife into "our" world in a variety of beautiful ways, calling upon us to not forget what we once knew so intimately, and teaching us to be more mindful and empathetic.

Artist **Julie T. Chapman** draws us in with a style she calls "disrupted realism." She explains that, "The fragmented, 'incomplete' aspect of these paintings is my response to the chaos and change that is everywhere in

our environment—social, political, natural. Many of the paintings are intended to confront the viewer, to spur us to ask questions of ourselves and of each other."

For her mixed media pieces like *What the Cat Knows*, she shares: "Cougars—those cats of many names—often feature in my paintings as symbols of both mythology (think Artemis) and wildness. Cats are famous for being inscrutable, and cougars are no exception. This one was alerted to something unknown, and her face was beautifully modeled by the morning light. This painting is also an experiment with a red-green color harmony—fun to do with the pale, monochromatic coat of our biggest wild cat."

Going back to the beginning, we see artists compelling us very early on. **National Museum of Wildlife** director, Steve Seamons, echoes that "animals were some of the first subjects that prehistoric humans depicted

in cave paintings, and they continue to resonate with us today. Through art, we strive to impart knowledge and generate wonder to inspire connections with wildlife and nature. Wildlife art is at the heart of everything we do. Our collection of over 5,000 cataloged works spans centuries from 2,500 B.C.E. to the present."

Seamons adds that the museum is home to the most extensive collection of Carl Rungius (1869-1959) paintings in the United States, and they are currently creating a catalogue raisonné for the artist that's regarded as the preeminent painter of North American wildlife. "Commissioned by the New York Zoological Society, Rungius created a series of paintings of North American mammals for their headquarters in the Bronx," says Seamons. *American Black Bear* (pictured here) comes from this project and represents Rungius's shift towards



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1. National Museum of Wildlife Art, *American Black Bear*, 1929, oil on canvas, 61 x 76", by Carl Rungius (1869-1959). Gift of the Jackson Hole Preserve, National Museum of Wildlife Art. © Estate of Carl Rungius. 2. Gallery Wild, *What the Cat Knows*, mixed media, 40 x 30", by Julie T. Chapman. 3. RJD Gallery, *Guthrie*, charcoal and water mounted on deep canvas, 42 x 68", by Tyler Vouras. 4. RJD Gallery, *Me and My Vulture*, oil on board, 28 x 31", by Jamie Wyeth. 5. Guy Combes, *Power Play*, oil on canvas, 60 x 46"

impressionism. In this painting, Rungius balances the society's need for anatomical accuracy with the vibrant colors and bold brushstrokes of his evolving style."

Known for his realistic portrayals of wildlife subjects inspired by his years growing up in Kenya, artist **Guy Combes** offers up delights like *Power Play*. "Severe drought brings some of the most charismatic species uncomfortably close," explains Combes of the oil painting. "In this 'power play,' I wanted to capture the moment where some thirsty lions drink as much precious water from the remaining trickle of the Ewaso Nyiro before a bull elephant intimidates

them enough to scatter to safety."

Combes has also attracted a following for his conservation activism, so there is an added layer of narrative that is significant to his work. "As a wildlife artist, I'm always aware of the importance of celebrating these beautiful animals as a way of defending their freedom" he says. "[And] when I'm considering painting compositions based on my lifetime of knowledge of the East African ecosystem, it's always important to me that each painting tells a story."

The story, like for so many others in this section, is one of compassion, integrity and a beautiful reconciliation with our many

wild neighbors.

Throughout the remainder of this section, you'll hear from additional artists, museums and galleries on the many magical nuances that make up the wildlife genre.

"It is difficult to find a better muse for art than wildlife," claims Richard Demato, owner of **RJD Gallery**, based in Romeo, Michigan. "Wildlife is a joy to behold; it stirs our curiosity and delights our senses. It reminds us of the interconnectedness of all sentient beings and our role in preserving earth's biodiversity. Wildlife can enhance and refresh to an art collection giving balance and variety and giving a 'pop' to any grouping."

COLLECTOR'S FOCUS

WILDLIFE



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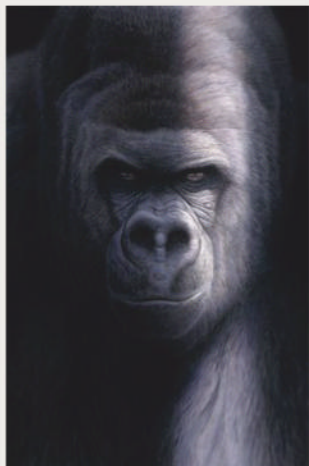
6. RJD Gallery, *Sol Lucet Omnibus*, acrylic on canvas, 36 x 30", by Esther Curini. 7. Elizabeth Mordensky, *Curious*, oil finger painting, 40 x 16" 8. Elizabeth Mordensky, *Winter Ponderings*, oil finger painting, 30 x 24" 9. Elizabeth Mordensky, *The Birds and The Beast*, oil finger painting, 36 x 60" 10. Renso Tamse, *African Dust*, watercolor, 45 x 65"

Esther Curini's *Sol Lucet Omnibus* presents a primate peering from the canvas with a gaze that is both daunting and gentle; a true "I am who I am" moment. The title translates to "the sun shines for everyone" and Curini reminds us that this phrase includes wildlife. Tyler Vouras draws inspiration from the natural world, a place where he has felt most at home since childhood. His muses are almost all birds of prey, raptors from a local bird rehabilitation center including *Guthrie*. He describes his work as an exploration of "visual world-building using flora and fauna, set within old master landscapes." Jamie Wyeth's *Me and My Vulture* is a stunning example of the artist's distinctive style and his animal portraits. Wyeth rescued the vulture that now circles the island where he lives and was the inspiration for the artwork."

Living on the borders of Yellowstone National Park, contemporary wildlife artist Elizabeth Mordensky finds no shortage of inspiration. Her work as a wildlife guide in the park allows her to observe the behavior, movements and characters of the animals of the Western United States in spectacular detail. Her highly textured oil finger paintings bring the subjects to life in a unique way. She is becoming well known for her approach to capturing winter wildlife, incorporating a bokeh effect to achieve depth of field in her snow scenes, and building texture and movement of snow flying off the canvas in others. From the wild energy of bison charging through the snow to the peaceful silence of a heavy snowfall, Mordensky has found a way to truly bring these moments to life.

When looking for the perfect piece of art to complement your home, Mordensky believes it is much more about how the piece speaks to you, rather than following a particular color scheme or design aesthetic. "The art itself will make a room," she says, "and is quite adaptable to any space. What you truly want is a piece that sparks interest and joy when you look at it."

Since he was a young child, artist Renso Tamse felt a strong connection to all wildlife. "A great deal of my work focuses on endangered species," he says, "and I want my paintings to serve as a reminder of our responsibility to protect and cherish the fragile wonders of the natural world, and the extraordinary animals that call it home. So, I try to bring out the spirit of the animal in a way that can move people to action to



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11. Renso Tamse, *Significance of Strength*, watercolor, 95 x 60" 12. Renso Tamse, *Dance of the Cranes*, watercolor on board, 63 x 87" 13. Carrie Goller Gallery, *Fern (Floriferous Collection)*, oil, 10 x 10", by Carrie Goller. 14. Cindy Sorley-Keichinger, *Contested*, acrylic, 24 x 18" 15. Cindy Sorley-Keichinger, *Swallow Dream*, acrylic, 18 x 9"

preserve these magnificent creatures and their habitat."

We see Tamse explore these themes in watercolor works like *African Dust*, featuring an elephant kicking up dirt; *Significance of Strength*—a highly detailed view of a gorilla; and *Dance of the Cranes*, showing a triptych of graceful, dancing cranes.

When collecting, Tamse says, "As with any piece of art, select something that moves you, that stirs something inside your soul. What is your Spirit Animal? Buy or commission a painting of that animal and each day, as you walk past it on your wall, it will connect you with nature and re-energize your spirit."

For artist Carrie Goller "exploration is

oxygen." One way she satisfies that need is by working in mediums as diverse as her subject matter. In addition to landscapes, seascapes and still life, Goller has a large body of work that focuses on the animal kingdom—from sweet, whimsical birds wearing crowns of flowers to small creatures like rabbits and squirrels, to farm animals, horses, wolves and more. Working in mediums that include oil, cold wax, encaustic and egg tempera, she places her subjects in realistically rendered landscapes as well as more abstract backgrounds.

Mentored by Max Hayslette and having studied under renowned artists such as Brad Kunkle, Juliette Aristides, Gabriel Lipper, Jim Lamb and Ned Mueller, her work reflects a blend of classical and experimental

approaches, drawing inspiration from nature's organic forms and vibrant colors.

Her delightful work can be found at Carrie Goller Gallery in Poulsbo, Washington, as well as in private and corporate collections worldwide. Goller has exhibited in museums and galleries in Washington, Arizona and California, and she is a signature member of Artists for Conservation.

Cindy Sorley-Keichinger is a primarily self-taught artist, with her work reflecting a deep love of nature and wildlife. "In these trying times, it is nice to enjoy the peace of nature and scenes of animals," she says. "A study has found that paintings of nature and wildlife have a calming effect on people, and some workplaces have brought in nature walks to help their staff

COLLECTOR'S FOCUS

WILDLIFE



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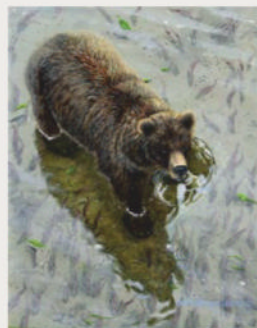
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to relax." Sorley-Keichinger tries to bring this serenity into her work.

She is a member of several Artist Organizations including Artists for Conservation, Society of Animal Artists and Women Artists of the West, to name just a few. She is also proud to have designed a coin for the Royal Canadian Mint. Find her work at the *Masterpieces in Miniature*—the

largest small works show in Canada—at Picture This Gallery in Sherwood Park, Alberta, for the month of May 2024.

Jamie Cassaboon's work starts with observation, and as a wildlife artist, he is always first inspired by the natural world. "Working monochromatically—in graphite—presents some unique challenges, and requires an even greater attention to the other elements

of art in the absence of color in order to draw the viewer in," Cassaboon says. "Composition and light become even more significant. But, in addition to these, I find that the story and energy of the piece become paramount. I am attracted to that captured moment that still carries the movement and action that allows viewers to engage with the story as it unfolds, and to imagine that unfolding."



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16. Carrie Goller Gallery, *Rambo* (Floriferous Collection), mixed media, 24 x 18", by Carrie Goller. 17. Cindy Sorley-Keichinger, *Geoldi's Monkey*, acrylic, 5 x 7" 18. Tamara Nelson, *Layla*, mixed media, 18 x 12" 19. Jamie Cassaboon, *Common Elder #1*, graphite on paper, 15 x 32" 20. Suzie Seerey-Lester, *Snack Food*, acrylic, 14 x 11" 21. Tamara Nelson, *Ghost*, mixed media, 24 x 18" 22. Suzie Seerey-Lester, *Kindred Spirits*, acrylic, 16 x 20" 23. Jamie Cassaboon, *Atlantic Puffin #1*, graphite on paper, 15 x 22" 24. Suzie Seerey-Lester, *Hi Ho Silver*, acrylic, 20 x 16"

Cassaboon's use of realism affords the opportunity to not only view the broader scene, but also to approach and engage with the textures and layers of the precise as well. Repeated views over time can continue to illuminate new appreciations or discoveries, as well as viewing from different angles and distances.

Tamara Nelson approaches each project looking for new, unique ways to convey her vision, and blends a multitude of disciplines, while breaking the rules to create her final pieces—working with traditional oils, charcoal, pastel, acrylic, resin and everything in between to achieve the final results. Her new *Wild Things* collection is born from her

love of animals and to draw attention to the endangered wildlife here and abroad. "To try and capture the beauty of these animals is a journey and a passion," she remarks.

Nelson also works with commercial interior designers creating custom pieces for their projects working from specification books showing the room concepts she creates pieces for each project to complement the space. Nelson also has her own award winning, one-artist gallery in Laguna Beach, California.

Known for her remarkable barns and birds, is the international award-winning wildlife artist Suzie Seerey-Lester. Her acrylic works include mysterious backgrounds that have

you looking for hidden animals—inspiring you to take a second look, and then another. Seerey-Lester has traveled all over the world to paint amazing subjects, and will only paint animals she has seen in the wild.

Pictured here, you'll find whimsical works like *Snack Food*, of a bear finding food in water; *Kindred Spirits*, that features a totem pole with a surprise face peeking through the right corner of the painting; and *Hi Ho Silver* depicting one of the artist's classic barn scenes.

Seerey-Lester's works can be found at Trailside Gallery, Native Visions, The Plainsmen Gallery and Gallery by SEWE. ●

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GUARDIANS



INTRODUCTION BY ALYSSA M. TIDWELL

1

In the Hawaiian language, people don't call themselves the "owners" of their pets. Instead, you're their "kahu." The word often refers to pastors, preachers or ministers, but it can also mean guardian, honored attendant, caretaker and protector.

Our pets are more than just pets. They're our hearts. They're a part of our family, and we love them beyond measure. It's easy for me to sit here and write about pets, because I have a dog of my own, Alfie, and I love him more than anything. The number of talented artists turning their attention toward pet portraits seems to grow every day, and the market for this type of artwork is huge. Some people may want to memorialize a beloved pet who's passed away, while others might want to simply capture and celebrate their pets' personalities in

the here and now.

Animal art is just that. It's an art. Many painters have an immense amount of pride in the work they do, approaching their craft with the same fervor they would when painting people. "It's an artist's power and gift to interpret their world and allow others to see it, so for me, painting animals allows them to be seen the way I see them: pure, beautiful beings in harmony with the planet," says classically-trained artist **Jennifer Gennari**. "They're conscious creatures which are the flesh and blood representation of flowing rivers, mountains and forest trees, which bridge the gap between us and the more 'unconscious' natural world. We are interwoven with this planet, and when our minds forget that, our soul doesn't, which is why an animal encounter

of any kind reminds us of this interconnection. We see part of ourselves in them, and it's this connection that I strive to represent in my work."

Gennari studied classical realism under the great Daniel Graves at the Florence Academy of Art in Italy, and she's a faculty artist with the Portrait Society of America. Her painterly portraits of animals are as masterful as her portraits of people. "Animals have always been important to me. They're important to a lot of people, but I'm one of those types whose day is completely made from even the slightest encounter with one," she says. While Gennari had always worked in figurative art and narrative works, one day on a whim, she painted a sphynx cat and everything changed. "I posted the painting on



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1. Jennifer Gennari, *Foxhounds*, oil on linen, 30 x 36" 2. Jennifer Gennari, *Goals*, oil on panel, 8 x 10" 3. Grace DeVito, *Angus (French Bulldog)*, oil on canvas, 16 x 12"
4. Johanne Mangi, *Peaches n' Cream*, oil on linen, 12 x 9" 5. Grace DeVito, *JoJo (Cow)*, oil on canvas, 8 x 8"

Instagram, it sold, inquiries came in for similar paintings, and eight years later animal portraiture has made up about 95 percent of my career. I do a painting a day, and where one may get tired of the same topic over and over again, I find fulfillment.

I'm inspired by the purity animals embody and the goodness they inspire in people. We want to be better for them and because of them."

Discussing her artistic approach, Gennari says, "I think [it] starts with the

enormous awe and respect I have for animals...I think when you feel passionately about anything, that's bound to work its way into your paint."

Within the pages of this special section, collectors can explore more artwork from





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6 **Grace DeVito**, *Angora Goat*, oil on canvas panel, 9 x 6" 7. **Johanne Mangi**, *Blenheim Wonder*, oil on linen, 10 x 8" 8. **Michelle Delanty**, *Nala*, gouache, 8 x 6"
9 **Michelle Delanty**, *Duke*, gouache on board, 10 x 8"

talented artists who capture the animals in our lives, from dogs and cats to farm animals and more.

"Our animals are important members of our families and choosing to have a portrait is a way to keep them forever present," says artist **Grace DeVito**. "We only have our animals in our lives a short time, really. Having a portrait of them is tribute to the companionship and love they provided. It's my goal to recreate the beautiful and varied textures of fur and capture the likeness and personality of my sitter. It's really a thrill to bring it all together and provide a beautiful portrait for the client." The artist is inspired by a variety of subjects—people, animals, landscapes, florals—and she's especially captivated by light and the way it reveals the subject. "I am most attracted to a distinct yet soft light, [as] it reveals form so beautifully." DeVito searches for this type of light or tries her best to recreate it when setting up her sitters.

"When I paint portraits I strive to create work that literally breathes," says Connecticut-based painter **Johanne Mangi**. "Capturing aliveness is more than shapes, color and edges; it needs to have a freshness and depth of character in order to meet my standards." She continuously works from life for reference in her artwork and uses her own pets for study

and inspiration. "This has been a major ongoing factor in my work. It's the reason I continue to be excited every day when I'm at the easel. My students also inspire me with their desire to learn and improve. So much to paint and so little time!" Mangi adds that animal portraiture can be timeless and advises collectors to look for artists who have commanding knowledge of the subject, active brushwork and the competent use of light and shadow. "These paintings will have a presence second to none," she says.

The award-winning portraits by **Michelle Delanty** reflect the artist's ability to capture

the sensitive nature of animals, as well as her desire to express the love and depth of their souls in paint. "My paintings are created directly out of my belief that the behavior of our domesticated animals is a message to mankind, related to the very essence of unconditional love," she reflects. "Each animal has its own story and its own particular relationship with its human family. They are part of the good in this world and impact our lives in many ways. No two stories of pet relationships are the same. I strive to honor all animals, their families and their stories through my paintings." ●

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www.johannemangi.com

MICHELLE DELANTY

www.soulfulpetportraits.com

COLLECTOR'S FOCUS
ART OF THE HORSE



A TIMELESS

CONNECTION

INTRODUCTION BY ALYSSA M. TIDWELL

N.E. Smyth ©



1. Nancy Smyth, *The After Bath*, pastel, 37 x 29" 2. Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902), *White Horse and Sunset*, ca. 1863, oil on cardboard, 11½ x 15½", Public domain. 3. Diego Velázquez (1599-1660), *A White Horse*, ca. 1634-35, oil on canvas, 120 x 96½". Public domain. 4. Nancy Smyth, *Salt River Grazing*, watercolor, 20 x 16" 5. Christine Obers, *Blue*, pastel, 11 x 14"

For millennia humans and horses have been linked. They've been our great companions through war and crusades, through the advent of agriculture, through times of joy and leisure. Horses were thought to have first been domesticated around 3500 BCE, likely in southern Russia and Kazakhstan, and later brought to the ancient Near East about 1,200 years later. "The adoption of the horse was one of the single most important discoveries for early human societies. Horses and other animals were used to pull wheeled vehicles, chariots, carts and wagons and horses were increasingly used for riding in the Near East from at least [circa] 2000 BC onwards," according to the British Museum. In the United States, it wasn't until the early 20th century that people gradually transitioned from horse-drawn carriages to automobiles as their primary form of transportation. As one of the first domesticated

animals in the world (perhaps *the first*), we've had a fair amount of time to form a bond with these beasts, because the connection between humankind and horses isn't purely utilitarian—far from it. To this very day, all kinds of people—ranchers, cowboys, cowgirls, farmers, schoolchildren, office workers—ride, care for and work with horses for the sheer joy of it. For the love of their horses.

So, of course, it's no wonder that through the centuries, we've seen depictions of horses over and over again in art. We see them in the earliest murals thousands of years ago, in the artwork of the great Renaissance painters like Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael, in 19th- and 20th-century sporting art, all the way up to modern day artists. Military art throughout the ages often depicted the horse as well—in the tumultuous heat of cavalry battles and as the trusty steeds of medieval knights. And undoubtedly one of the

COLLECTOR'S FOCUS ART OF THE HORSE



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most challenging aspects of capturing the horse rests with getting the anatomy just right. It's a feat that takes years of technical practice and close observation of these unique creatures. Painted around 1635, Spanish master Diego Velázquez's *A White Horse* (or *Caballo Blanco*) deftly captures the weight, force and precise musculature of the equine form, as well as the purity and nobility associated with white horses. The piece is also massive, measuring about 10 by 8 feet, further contributing to its grandiosity. Another excellent depiction of an ivory horse is Albert Bierstadt's *White Horse and Sunset*, a detailed study over a completed landscape that celebrates the romanticism of this dignified animal.

To this day, our bond with horses continues to run deep. It will likely also come as no surprise that many present-day artists who paint equine art have horses of their own or have been around horses for most of their lives.

Continue reading through the pages of this special section to learn more from artists working today who are captivated by the beauty and spirit of the horse.

California artist **Christine Obers** has spent many decades drawing and painting horses. Her lifelong experience with caring for and showing horses is evident in her work. "Horses are social animals with behavior and hierarchies similar to our own," she says. "I admire their strength and conversely their timid nature. I am fascinated by this dichotomy. Power and fear are



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relevant in our own society. It is my thought that it is less that horses' behaviors mirror ours, but more that our behaviors mirror theirs. It is from this point of view that I examine the individual character of each subject I paint. In my portraits of horses, I believe we perceive something of ourselves." Obers' commissioned portraits and paintings of horses have won numerous international awards and can be found in private collections across the United States and Canada.

Nearly 50 nationally-recognized plein air artists will flock to Tehachapi, California, this May for the *Art 2024 Tehachapi* paint-out sponsored by the **Tehachapi Arts Commission**. And as a creature that has inspired artists for centuries, the art of the horse will be especially prevalent during the annual spring event.

Returning for the fourth year is **Annette Hammer**, whose love of landscape painting came from traveling with her father, an agriculture teacher, in the San Joaquin



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6. Tehachapi Arts Commission, *Mustang Valley*, oil, 12 x 16", by Annette Hammer. 7. Christine Obers, *Ruby*, pastel, 10 x 8" 8. Tehachapi Arts Commission, *Morgan's Morning*, pastel on board, 16 x 20", by Otto Sturcke. 9. Sally Moren, *The Dusk Spinners*, oil on canvas, 16 x 20" 10. Tehachapi Arts Commission, *On Patrol*, oil, 9 x 12", by Chuck Kovacic.

Valley and from visiting the western states and national parks. "One of the highlights of the May paint-out in Tehachapi is the [chance] to see the wild mustangs," she says of her oil *Mustang Valley*. "The yearlings travel down the valley and back, getting a drink from the blue watering troughs and running to stretch their legs."

Another participating artist, **Chuck Kovacic** brings an oil titled *On Patrol*, depicting two riders on horseback. "One of the charming aspects of life in a rural community is the ability to have access to endless trails and the horses to explore them with," he says.

Pastelist **Otto Sturcke** won Best of Show at *Art 2021 Tehachapi* with his pastel still life *Camellias* and Best Still Life in 2023 for *The Milano Boot*. Influenced by the Dutch Masters, Sturcke seeks to impart his admiration for the classical through his use of light, shadow and texture. Of his piece in the 2024 event, *Morgan's Morning*, Sturcke says, "Brimming with morning light, a mare and foal share a tranquil moment that I found endearing. The color contrast between their beautiful coats and the background made for an intriguing subject to capture in soft pastel."

Nancy Smyth has loved animals since childhood, especially horses and dogs, which are the primary focus of her artwork. "The constant challenge to not only convey their beauty but the essence of their souls

is my driving force for creating art," she says. When starting a new piece, Smyth's top priority is capturing the uniqueness of the animal for the enjoyment of her audience. "It is important for the artwork to not only convey a realistic rendering of subject matter," she says, "but enable the art to reach down deep inside the viewer and touch them in such a way that it will create a memorable and special experience."

Painting is how artist **Sally Moren** shares her emotional connection to the rural landscape and her lifelong love of horses. Her work captures the essence and the many

moods of the equine world, with a special focus on the sport of foxhunting. All of her paintings depict real people, horses and actual hunting country. Landscapes are also an important part of her storytelling style. "I get swept up by these beautiful old farms, with their ancestral trees and pastoral views. They exude an endurance and untouched beauty that begs to be painted, whether it's a snowy cornfield or a stand of sycamores," she says. Her autumn painting *The Dusk Spinners* depicts a horseback rider and hounds racing against the sunset. ●

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Show Previews

OUR EDITORS TALK TO
ARTISTS ABOUT THE WORK
IN THEIR LATEST SHOWS

Jamie Wyeth, *Blind Goat*, oil and
acrylic on gesso panel, 40 x 30"
Page 110

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RICHIE CARTER

Full Preparation

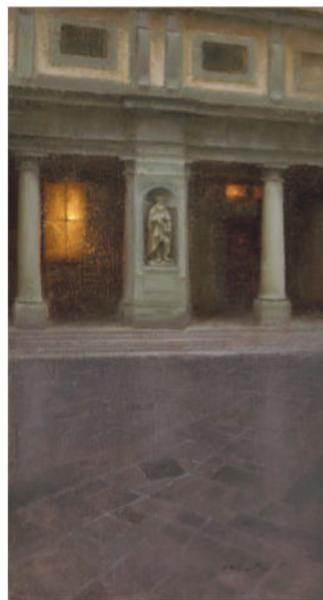
Montana-based painter Richie Carter has been traveling to Paris for the last six years and staying in the same apartment for a month at a time. The view out over the famous city has become his muse as he watches the light and weather dance over the buildings and monuments. When it finally came time to assemble the works together and show them, a title leaped out at him—*Se Préparer*, which translates loosely as “to prepare oneself.”

“It’s been very serendipitous. I’ve been preparing for this body of work for five or six years as I’ve been traveling to Paris. Every time I go I stay in this same apartment which has rooftop views out over Paris. It’s kind of like a second home for me. And it provides endless inspiration,” Carter says. “This one view, in particular, is one that I can’t get enough of. It’s just so beautiful and dramatic. Everything culminated to this view.”

The new grouping of paintings, as many as 20 pieces, will be on view starting May 9 at Arcadia Contemporary in New York City. It will be his first solo show at the prominent Manhattan gallery known for its contemporary realism by top artists.

The most prominent view from this new series of French paintings is from the Montmartre area, which has a magnificent perspective of the Eiffel Tower in the far distance. In many ways, though, the key to these paintings is the apartment in the immediate foreground with its mansard-style roof, clusters of chimneys and a single skylight. Carter will often paint one of the windows on the top floor illuminated.

“I don’t know who lives there. It’s in a totally different building that I don’t have access to, but I would love to know who it



1
Richie Carter
in his Montana
studio.

2
The Old Master,
oil on linen,
30 x 16"

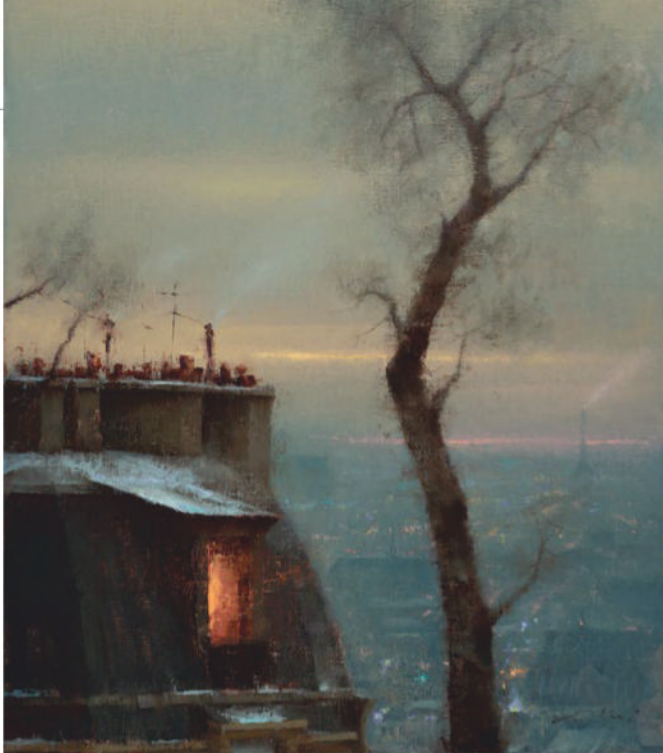
3
*We'll Make it
Through*, oil on
linen, 33 x 42"



is. I don't add anything into the paintings that aren't already there. I just show up and paint what's in front of me. That little light in the window always makes me curious about who lives there," the artist adds. "Paris has been painted by everybody, so who knows if those windows have been painted before, or even if an artist has lived there before. It's certainly a possibility."

Carter says he was browsing Instagram one day and found a painting of Paris featuring similar windows and rooftops, though this work was set during winter with snow blanketing much of the scene. The work was *Vue de toits (Effet de neige)* by Gustave Caillebotte, one of the more realistic impressionist painters of the late 19th century. "It's such a beautiful view and proves that Paris really is timeless," he adds.

Other artwork in the Arcadia show will include vertical street scenes done in Carter's distinct tonalist style. The works, pieces such as *The Old Master* and *Campo*, are complex examinations of value and how he can use it in smaller vignettes of cityscapes. "I do see a lot of my work



4



4

Please Don't Go Home Yet, oil on linen, 28 x 24"

5

Avant La Nuit, oil on linen, 16 x 20"

6

Se Préparer, oil on linen, 20 x 20"



6

as tonalist that really focuses on a value shift," he says, though he admits his larger landscapes of Paris do have elements with strong saturation of light and color.

Some of Carter's Paris discoveries originated from fellow painter Daniel Keys, who has done his own exploring of the City of Light. The two artists have traveled together and routinely show each other new subjects.

Carter adds that when he returns home, the artworks themselves have been on quite a journey. "These works travel all around the world. I've taken panels to Paris, Venice, England...they go on adventures with me

as I paint. It reminds me a John Singer Sargent, who would travel with his sketches and studies, and he would stay with dignitaries and meet interesting people. There's this romantic idea of a traveling artist that I feel when I travel with my paints," he says. When it comes to the logistics of traveling with paints, Carter says he takes small tubes of paint that go in his luggage, and then also packs a stack of 8-by-10-inch panels. They dry somewhat quickly after they've been painted and they travel fairly easily in a suitcase. "Sometimes I'll ship them back, but most of the time they make the journey with me."

For *Se Préparer*, Carter compares his Parisian cityscapes to some of the work of Claude Monet, particularly how Monet would return to the same subject over and over again. "I love how much he was painting the same subject matter—different light, different times of year, and when he was different ages," he says. "This idea that you're seeing the same subject as time changes—and as I change, too—is really fascinating to me." ●

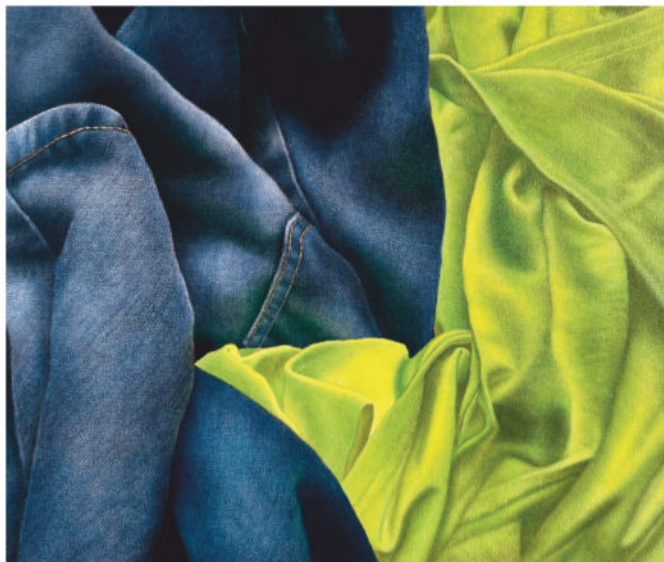
Arcadia Contemporary

421 W. Broadway • New York, NY 10012 • (646) 861-3941 • www.arcadiacontemporary.com



FRANK ORITI

As Real As It Gets



The still life painters always have interesting studios because they have stuff. On the walls. In boxes. Piled in corners. Stuffed into closets. These are the painter's subjects, so they have to remain accessible. For Frank Oriti, he's trying to keep a cleaner studio so resists the piles and clutter.

"I've tried to do better about what I bring into my space. My studio is not big but it works, which is why I want to be more in control of what I'm bringing in as far as what can be inspiring to be around and to look at," he says from his northern Ohio studio, located in Lakewood, a suburb west of Cleveland. Oriti also points out that he's still getting used to referring to himself as a still life painter. "Until fairly recently I saw myself as a figurative painter, not a still life painter. Over the last eight years, I've been painting objects more, mostly because I'm interesting in creating texture and materials, things like denim and leather. They're like another favorite subject, which is tattooed flesh."

This fluid movement around genres came about several years back, when Oriti took a workshop with painter Bo Bartlett. "I got inspired by Bo's teaching and his work, and it opened my eyes up to being more than just a portrait painter. It opened up another world to me, coming from portrait painting to painting these little slivers of clothing and texture. There was a shift in my work," he says, adding that some of his earliest breakout pieces were sneakers. He points to works like *85s*, which show a pair of Air Jordans laying on their sides in an interlocking form. "I'm not a huge sneakerhead, but I sort of got really interested in the culture. Sneakers are beautiful and artful objects, but it's an expensive thing to collect. I was drawn to their colors and textures and how they break down over time. It got me interested in that world."

Oriti will be showing new work in a show titled *As Real As It Gets*, which opens May



1
Hi Vis, oil on
canvas covered
panel, 20 x 24"

2
85s, oil on
canvas covered
panel, 16 x 16"

3
Surrender,
oil on canvas,
30 x 24"





18 at RJD Gallery in Romeo, Michigan. The artist says paintings like *85s* and others, will unify his textural interests together under one roof. "They will all go together and there will be a bit of variation to keep things fresh in the studio," he says.

Other works in the show include *In These Boots* and *Scarpi*, both showing shoes of varying degrees of wear and cleanliness. The contrasting subjects could also represent different economic backgrounds—one is part of a blue-collar uniform and the other is part of white-collar office fashion. In *Against the Grain*, he shows a leather vest that has been worn and loved.

In *Surrender*, Oriti paints a pair of denim pants against a reddish background. "There are images that I paint that belong in the real world, they belong in a space, and then others, more specifically the denim pieces, they become these free-floating abstracted works," he says. "When I started doing the denim paintings, they were very stark and up against a white background, I wanted them to appear as if they were suspended on the gallery wall. And then, I also think a lot about color relationships, and how they exist in the world. I've been using this beautifully destroyed block of concrete for some of the pieces because I love the attention it draws within the paintings."

Some of this fascination with objects goes back to his portrait work. When he would ask people to pose for him, he would not direct them what to wear. This produced some fascinating results. "I would tell them to just be themselves. So many of them started showing up in the same things: jeans, hooded sweatshirts, leather jackets...and their tattoos," he says. "The work evolved from there. It became more about the look and attitude of the people I was painting."

And even though these new pieces don't have people in them, they still have that look and that attitude because his objects convey character. "Art imitates life and realism transcends it," says Joi Jackson Perle, RJD's gallery director. "This style brings the details of an object, a person, or a moment into full focus in a way often missed in real life. Frank Oriti's exploration of realism lets us examine and appreciate the tangible beauty that surrounds us."

The exhibition opens May 18 in Romeo, Michigan. ●



4
Against the Grain,
oil on canvas,
48 x 42"

5
In These Boots, oil
on canvas covered
panel, 24 x 20"

6
Scarpi, oil on canvas
covered panel,
16 x 16"





ROBIN JONES

Artful Awareness



1

Artist Robin Jones has been an advocate of animal rights for a long time but when she saw the 2013 documentary *Black Fish*, about the controversy over an orca at SeaWorld and the plight of animals in captivity, it catapulted her activism to the next level.

It wasn't long before her concerns extended beyond the animal kingdom to the environment at large—especially related to the climate crisis.

"Generally, my work comes from that place of environment activism and care for the natural world," says Jones. "We live in such a hyper-individualistic culture that we easily lose sight of our interconnectedness and how our behavior affects everyone else, and all life on the planet."

Jones' oil and metal leaf paintings aim to be a visual reminder of this interconnectedness. She paints mostly young girls and women amid stylized elements of the natural world. During the past year, female youth from other cultures around the world have been a focus of her figurative work.

"I was reading so much about how other places in the

world are being disproportionately affected by what's happening to the climate while contributing less in terms of carbon emissions," says Jones.

Two of her pieces, *Ghost of the Mountains* and *Severance*, feature young Tibetan girls surrounded by environmental and political symbolism. The former includes images of the snow leopard and snow lotus with an outline of Mt. Everest in the background, all of which are in danger due to global warming. The other, *Severance*, reflects Jones' (a practicing Tibetan Buddhist) widely shared conviction that Tibet should be liberated from China.

Another piece, *Meditation on the Holocene*, depicts a young girl from Myanmar against a backdrop of butterflies and cherry blossoms, both prevalent in Southeast Asia where extreme climate events are becoming the norm. The title references the climate-stable epoch that has allowed us to thrive since the end of the dinosaur age. Some scientists are arguing that we are now living in the Anthropocene era—defined as one where human activity has been the dominant

1 *Ghost of the Mountains*, oil, gold and platinum leaf on aluminum panel, 24 x 36"

2 *Meditation on the Holocene*, oil and gold leaf on aluminum panel, 36 x 24"

3 *Severance*, oil and gold leaf on aluminum panel, 30 x 24"

4 *Talk to Me*, oil and gold leaf on aluminum panel, 17½ x 23½"



2



3

influence on climate and the environment.

Talk to Me is an example from a new series on trees and forests Jones is exploring after reading Suzanne Simard's memoir *Finding the Mother Tree*, in which the forest ecologist shares her discovery of the truly amazing network of exchange

beneath the forest floor.

Diversity and inclusivity also play a role in Jones' choice of subject matter. "It's really important to me, especially as a white person of privilege from this country," she says. "If you're painting the human figure, for me it's important to

represent all humans and not just what I know. I think it's important that all voices are heard and different narratives are told from my own."

Choosing to highlight young people is also intentional. "They are the younger generations of today who will inherit the planet we leave them," says Jones. "I see them as a visual reminder of our responsibility for those who will come after us." Jones also finds great inspiration—and hope—in the strength and resiliency of the young. "I was trying to figure out a way to have that be the underlying message but also inspire active hope—which is different from being 'hopeful'. It's engaging with the world in a way that we're actively taking steps toward the outcome we want. I hope my art showcases my belief that it's not too late. I do believe that art can inspire, galvanize and bring awareness while also being aesthetically beautiful."

Jones' exhibition *Portraits of the Future* at Blue Rain Gallery's Durango, Colorado, location will open with an artist reception on May 3, from 5 to 7 p.m. and remain on view through May 17. ●

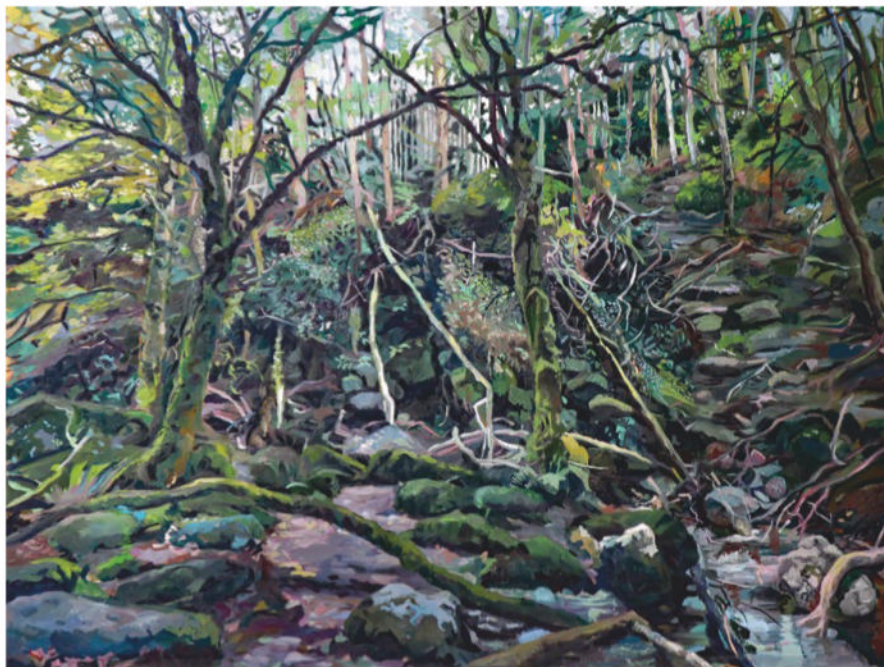


4

Blue Rain Gallery

934 Main Avenue, Suite B • Durango, CO 81301
(970) 232-2033 • www.blueraingallery.com

Botanical Visions



1
Patricia Schappler, *Eden*, oil on sealed cradled board, 36 x 48"

2
Alyssa Fields, *Hidden Place*, oil on canvas, 24 x 36"

3
Benji Alexander, *Palus, Icon*, oil on canvas, 36 x 24"

The theme of florals and gardens is explored during 33PA's latest online exhibition on Artsy. While the range of artwork in the show is diverse—figurative paintings, still lifes and landscapes all in completely different styles—each piece incorporates botanicals in some form. "When selecting works for the show I lean toward artists who think outside of the box while keeping in mind the theme and their own vision," says 33PA curator Didi Menendez.

In Alyssa Fields' oil on canvas *Hidden Place*, a pair of hands delicately intertwine amongst thorny rose vines. At the moment, those hands are soft and unscathed, but with the slightest movement they might be scratched and torn. "We are all so vulnerable. Our backgrounds and our stories are something we may often hide out of fear or







4

judgment,” says Fields. “However, sharing that vulnerability can lead to understanding and compassion. This painting is about slowly letting that vulnerability grow and let that part of me be something that I am willing to share with others.”

Eden, by New Hampshire-based artist Patricia Schappler, depicts a mossy forest overgrown with plant life. “In traveling, I always walk the forests. These are gardens of immeasurable beauty, expressing time with the rhythms of rising and falling limbs and tumbling

rock. This piece is born of memory and a recent visit to Ireland’s Wicklow,” she says of *Eden*. “It remains familiar; a place I could call home.”

Benji Alexander Palus is a self-taught painter working in figurative realism. “My work is a life-long study of feminine strength and beauty, experienced through the bonds of close friendship,” he says. His oil in the show, *Icon*, captures a nude woman with an intricate series of tattoos, primarily florals, winding from her feet all the way up to the top of her shoulder blades. “I work exclu-

4 Michael Van Zeyl, *Magnolia Storm*, oil on canvas, 36 x 36"

5 Lisa Fricker, *An Eager Student*, oil on canvas, 20 x 16"



5

sively with a small group of friends who embody the qualities most admire—passion, courage, wisdom, independence, kindness, vulnerability, resilience—all tempered but not destroyed by deep suffering,” he adds. “My inspiration flows from the closeness of these platonic, yet intimate relationships. I do believe that beauty is everywhere, but

I’ve always felt the need to keep my artwork very personal. I’ve never painted a face that I haven’t seen crying, laughing, sleeping, looking back at me with care or amusement, sometimes anger.”

Among the other artists whose work can be explored in the exhibition are Michael Van Zeyl, Lisa Fricker, Kei J. Constantinov,

Shawn Sullivan, Graziella Mura, Lisa Cyr, Thomas Wharton, J. Adam McGalliard and more. **GARDEN** will be on view at Artsy.net for the month of May. ●

33PA Zhou B Art Center, 4th Floor • 1029 W. 35th Street
Chicago, IL 60609 • www.poetsandartists.com
www.artsy.net/show/33-contemporary-g-a-r-d-e-n



ELIZABETH FLOYD

Simple Pleasures

Whether building furniture with her grandfather, constructing a stone wall with her dad or sewing and painting with her aunt, Elizabeth Floyd has been creating things out of nothing since she was a child. She was also taught to notice beauty at an early age. Both of her grandmothers were avid gardeners—a trait she carries on—and it was not unusual for them to point out a stunning vista or a field of wildflowers while traveling or taking a walk.

During the last year of her decade-long career as an architect, Floyd was at her desk gazing out the window over the rooftops of Georgetown in Washington, D.C., admiring the angle of the light and the clouds in the distance. “And I said, ‘when I’m a full-time artist, these are the moments I will celebrate,’” shares Floyd.

Floyd stayed true to her word and has been “elevating everyday moments into fine art” ever since. She crafts her still life compositions out of flowers she’s grown

and other items with personal significance—books she’s read, seashells she’s picked up, porcelain pieces and other mementos from her travels—that fill her home.

“The objects that are in my paintings I possess,” she says. “I live with them. They’re on my dining room table or in my living room. Almost every item has a story in it. I’m always trying to visualize the joy and love and color that my collectors will be able to bring into their life and become a form of their own expression.”

Similar to architecture, she sees her paintings as another opportunity to create new spaces to dwell in, savor and enhance one’s everyday experience. “Architecture is really about creating environments that help people live a beautiful life,” she says. “I find that painting is the same thing—it’s more individual but at the same time it’s available to more people. It can be shared online; people invite it into their homes where it can be appreciated by friends and family. My

1
You’re My Heart, oil,
18 x 24"

2
*Simple Pleasures are
Much Better*, oil, 36 x 24"

3
Spring is Here, oil,
18 x 24"

4
Peonies and Cassatt, oil,
36 x 36"



2



3



4

work is personal, but there's a universality to it as well."

Floyd created *Peonies and Cassatt* after flipping through an old sketchbook where she had first conceived the piece with a different name—*A Time to Love and Embrace*. She changed the title but the painting remains a contemplation of motherhood, as were many of Mary Cassatt's most popular works.

Her pieces often include renditions of work by historic artists—*Simple Pleasures are Much Better* features a book by a mid-century California architect and a landscape by William Merritt Chase arranged around another bouquet of peonies. "Peonies are an experience in themselves," she says. "They have such variety and lushness, and ask you to live a better life. These are simple pleasures that add so much depth to your life. Bringing in flowers, your coffee table filled with beautiful things or spending a Saturday at the beach with your friends on a blustery day.

"To me, art is about communication and connection and my highest goal when I'm painting is to create a connection with another kindred spirit."

Floyd's latest work will be featured in a solo exhibition titled *Memories in Bloom* at Principle Gallery in Charleston, South Carolina, from May 3 through 31, with a reception on opening day from 5 to 8 p.m. ●

Principle Gallery 125 Meeting Street • Charleston, SC 29401 • (843) 727-4500 • www.principlegallery.com



ELIZABETH HIGGINS

Innate Inspiration

Growing up in Canada, in Toronto, Elizabeth Higgins drew wherever and whenever she could. Her father intended for her to become a doctor but one day she stopped at the door of the art studio in her high school and was captured. She saw the other girls listening to classical music and making art. The teacher invited her to audit the class and sent her to night school to study art. Today with degrees in art from Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario,

and Parsons School of Design in New York, she creates paintings and monotypes of colorful, minimal beauty.

An exhibition, *Elizabeth Higgins - New Monotypes*, will be shown at George Billis Gallery in New York, May 2 through 31.

Having studied with Leland Bell, Paul Resika and the Canadian master print maker J.C. Heywood, and having admired artists from 19th-century French masters to the figurative artists of the San Francisco

Bay Area, Higgins has avoided becoming a product of their influence and produces art that is uniquely hers. She recounts the advice of Philip Guston who wrote, "Studio Ghosts: When you're in the studio painting, there are a lot of people in there with you—your teachers, friends, painters from history, critics...and one by one, if you're really painting, they walk out. And if you're really painting, you walk out."

When she first went to the Art Gallery of



1
Hydrangeas #6,
monotype, 12 x 12"

2
*Woman at Window
#2*, monotype,
12 x 9"

3
Morning Light,
monotype with
watercolor, 11 x 17"

4
Hydrangeas #9,
monotype, 12 x 12"



2



3



4

Ontario, she was impressed by the poetic simplicity of the bronzes and original plasters donated to the museum by the British sculptor Henry Moore.

In her exhibition are three monotypes of an arrangement of hydrangeas she saw in the home of a friend. “I was struck by the composition and the light,” she explains. “I stopped and took it in and was inspired. I did some sketches and decided to pursue the motif.

“I don’t analyze,” she continues. “I react to the landscape or the scene. I react to the quality of the light, the play of shadow and light, and the light’s ethereal quality. I make a spiritual connection.” When asked about her process, she replied briefly but revealingly, “It’s innate. I just do it.”

Her son William, then a law student at Fordham University, once said to her, “What would the world be like without art and artists, Mom? It would be a wasteland.” He also introduced her to the music and poetry of fellow Canadian, Leonard Cohen who wrote, “There is a crack, a crack in everything. That’s how the light gets in.” William died tragically on Christmas day in 2018. It was art that slowly let the light back in to Higgins’ life. ●

George Billis Gallery 527 W. 23rd Street
New York, NY 10011 • (212) 645-2621
www.georgebillis.com



1



2

ANDREA ALMOND

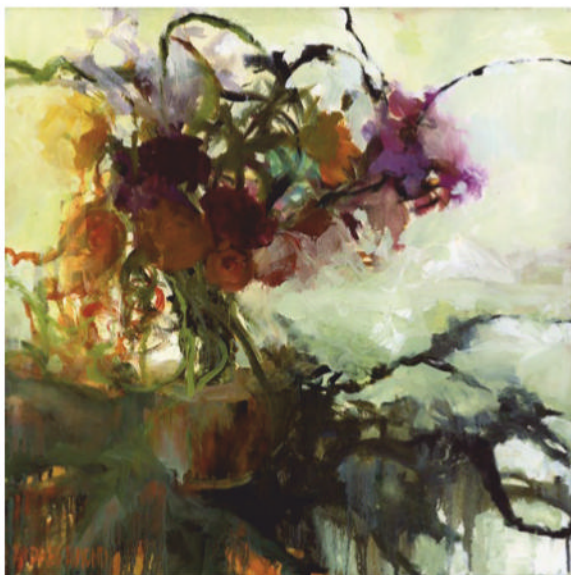
Light and Shadow

By Maggie Cibik

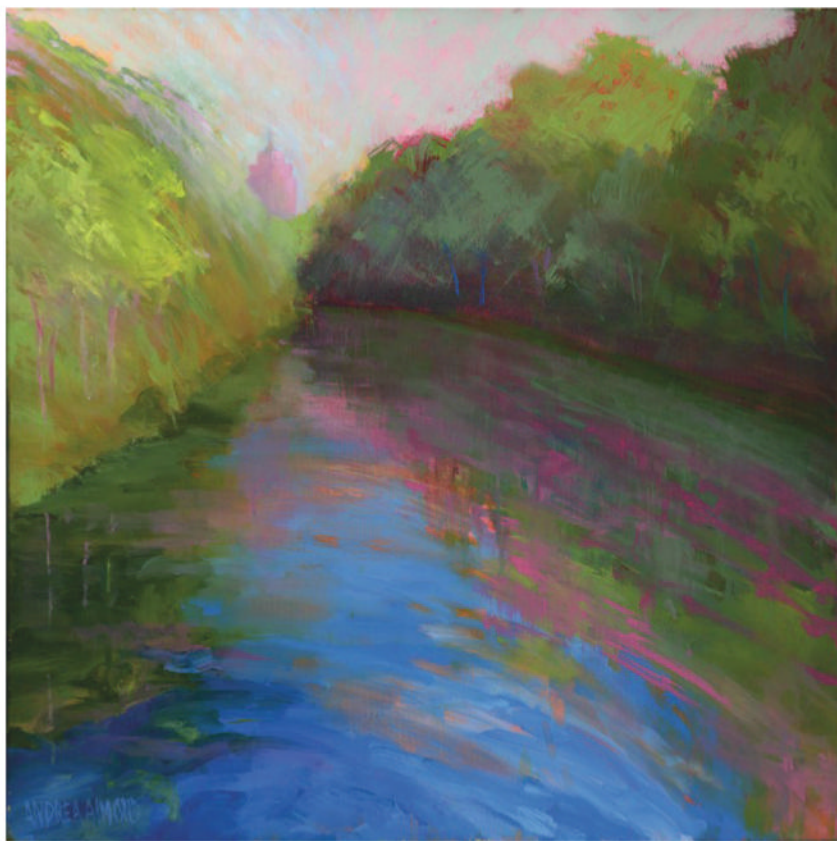
The perfect balance of light and shadow is sometimes what makes a painting feel so real and intimate. The interplay between the two holds so much power within a work. The way light strikes across water, or the way shadows loom over pavement, derives a version of the world that only artists can see. In her solo exhibition, *Light and Shadow*, artist Andrea Almond explores this duality with layered and multifaceted themes, creating floral still lifes and urban landscapes in a voice so uniquely her own it demands to be heard.

Painting runs in Almond's DNA. She grew up watching her father paint in their garage on the weekends. Early on she knew she shared that same passion. She continued to grow more in love with art and pursued a fine art degree at the University of North Texas. While maintaining a successful corporate career, she made time to take artists workshops, and spent many years painting in plein air, building her foundation of observational and drawing skills.

In the 2010s, Almond moved to San Antonio and began painting full time. She joined Art Gallery Prudencia in 2022. She realized she wanted to paint observational art, zoning in on the many possibilities floral still life provided as a subject. Using bouquets from the grocery store for reference, she was able to find ways to marry light and shadow in an unconventional



3



- 1
Claremont Street, oil
on canvas, 12 x 12"
- 2
Disrupt, oil on canvas,
24 x 22"
- 3
Shadows and Stems,
oil on linen, 20 x 20"
- 4
Two Trees Plus Pink, oil
on canvas, 24 x 24"

4

and introspective way.

"Almond's works possess a heightened luminosity," says gallery owner Prudence Lucas. "An otherworldly radiance washes across her beautiful river paintings and her immense, vacillating skies. Her still life tells the story of light and shadow, the symphonies of color and emotion."

Her ongoing show features 24 new works that feel almost like a love letter to her obsession with light, color and shadow and how, when woven together, they tell a story that can convey so much more than what is on the canvas.

"I love that there are so many possibilities," says Almond. "Maybe a third of the floral still lifes were dead flowers, which for me is just a part of the whole cycle. They're

so beautiful, but they're so fragile. [The blooms] go so fast and yet there is beauty in the end of it."

Her piece *Shadows and Stems* encapsulates this duality with a balance of romantic purples and pinks, lost in swirls of gothic darkness, giving a traditional floral piece a dramatic twist with a thickened plotline. Another painting, *Disrupt*, is her personal favorite as the dead flowers captured the essence of a difficult time. Both paintings imbue darkness with beauty and beauty with darkness.

In addition to her florals, Almond also renders beautiful snapshots of San Antonio. With her urban landscapes, the audience gets to see what she sees, like looking over the San Antonio River in

Two Trees Plus Pink or driving down a city thoroughfare in *Claremont Street*. Almond shares her unique interpretations of these moments with the viewer, letting them draw from their experiences to create their own narrative.

Almond goes deeper than pretty flowers in vases or a sunset hanging over the city. She paints ephemeral experiences that break the definition of what these paintings should look like and questions if there should even be a definition at all.

Light and Shadow is on view through May 11, with an artist talk on April 20 at 3 p.m. ●

Art Gallery Prudencia
2518 N. Main Avenue • San Antonio, TX 78212
(210) 422-8681 • www.prudenciagallery.com



GEOFFREY JOHNSON

Narrative Interpretation

Through his cityscape and interior scenes, artist Geoffrey Johnson creates a world unto its very own. In a show opening May 17 at Principle Gallery, he will present 20 new paintings in his distinctive style of barely-there-figures in impressionistic backgrounds—continuing a trend focused on narrative and inspiring locales rather than a particular theme.

“Geoffrey Johnson has created a world of narrative interpretation with his illustrious compositions,” says Taylor Chauncey,

Principle Gallery assistant director. “His interiors evoke thought and his cityscapes capture the true essence of New York City. However, when I discuss Johnson’s work, I always tend to bring up his ability to evolve his work gradually. It began with his slow incorporation of color and has moved into new compositions. We’re beginning to see some restaurant/bar scenes, as we see in *French Restaurant I*, but Johnson always remains consistent with his style. An artist’s work needs to evolve throughout

their career, but it doesn’t have to be drastically different. Johnson always keeps it fresh while staying true to what his audience loves.”

Johnson explains that after 30 years of painting, his work is best when he paints whatever his focus is at the time. “I really can’t paint according to a theme. It’s just not how my brain works,” Johnson explains. “Usually my work comes from recent travels or favorite places. New Orleans is a new city for inspiration, and



1



2



3



1
Corner Café, oil on board,
36 x 36"

2
Untitled 149, oil on canvas,
50 x 50"

3
Grand Central V, oil on board,
36 x 24"

4
French Restaurant I, oil on
board, 16 x 12"

4

NYC never disappoints. I'm also inspired by interiors, almost always of older buildings and houses. It is the mood of the interior that strikes me."

For interior scenes like *French Restaurant I*, inspired by a Manhattan eatery, Johnson shares that "interiors have always drawn me in. It is such a creative space, and the natural light begs to be painted." We also see a grand interior view in show piece *Grand Central V*. "What can I say? It's Grand Central. I cannot seem to get away from it," he says. "It is just an iconic space and I always see it in a new light. Also, against the neutral colors,

figures are fascinating. Lately I have been using different gold paints, and Grand Central Station lends itself to gold."

In his cityscapes, Johnson reveals quiet yet bold beauties like *Corner Café*. "This is [also] inspired by New York City, but it could really be anywhere," he says. "The architecture in New York City, and the way the city is a grid gives great perspectives. Also, I love the 'blue hour' just before the sun sets. The sky against the lights of the city for about 45 minutes, is stunning."

Johnson also works within the guidelines of his own finely tuned "editing process" that involves wiping and removing paint,

often working in layers, and rotating between several pieces of work at any given time. "As for technique, I sketch out on the canvas or board, with the opposite end of the paintbrush, until I can get down what I have in my head successfully," the artist says. "I always have a lot of work that has been started."

Johnson's solo show at Principle Gallery's Alexandria, Virginia, location will open with a reception on May 17 from 6 to 8:30 p.m. and remain on view through June 10. ●

Principle Gallery 208 King Street • Alexandria, VA
22314 • (703) 739-9326 • www.principlegallery.com



The Power of Portraiture

Is there anything more compelling than the human face? It's a canvas of emotion that, even when expressionless, still reveals. It is also home to the unfathomable depths of the windows of the soul, where we can glimpse our universal humanity and connect most intimately with another. It's no wonder the art of portraiture has endured throughout the ages—from the unparalleled works of Rembrandt and Vermeer, Velasquez and Davinci to the contemporary artists who are faithfully—and skillfully—carrying on the classical techniques of the Old Masters today.

Curated by Michael Fetherston and presented at the Salmagundi Arts Club in New York City, *Face to Face* is an ongoing exhibition of portraiture and sculpture by several dozen leading classical realist artists, each with a unique aesthetic vision while all working exclusively from life. A second portrait show featuring 19th-century paintings by renowned artists including Ilya Repin, Solomon J. Solomon and William Merritt Chase runs concurrently in an adjoining gallery, providing visitors the opportunity to compare the old and the new side-by-side.

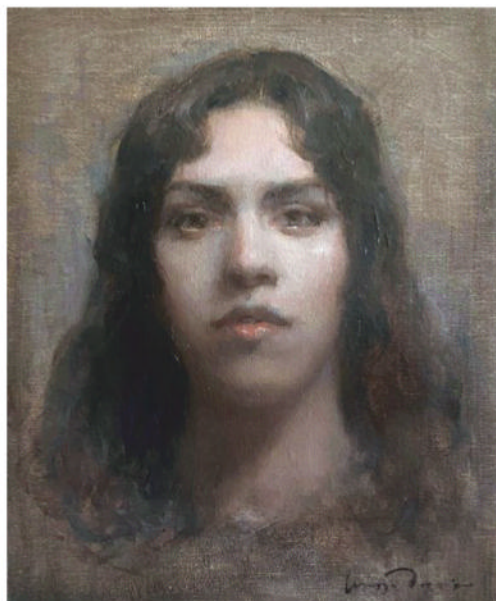
Among the many impressive featured artists is Janice Barnes, who is represented by her showpiece *Iris*, which successfully captures her model's dignified air and serene calm. "I feel that painting a portrait from life allows me to express the humanity and character of an individual in ways which might be lost when painting a portrait from photographs," says Barnes. "As the artist, I observe many different moments in time, even in the stillness of the model as they pose, and I attempt to translate those moments with my medium. I might emphasize aspects that speak to me or minimize those that do not. The interaction that takes place between myself and the model and the shared experience influences those choices."

Giovanni Priante will be presenting a self-portrait sculpture aptly titled *Reflection*. "I sought to capture the moments when we find ourselves trapped within our own thoughts," says Priante of the piece. "There



are times when self-reflection becomes a profound introspection, but it can also transform into a cage, separating us from reality and becoming a prison of our own making. The mirror, for me, symbolizes

this introspection. While self-observation can be beneficial, it also has the potential to lead to excessive self-criticism, which can paralyze us. This sculpture serves as a reminder of the delicate balance between



2



3

self-reflection and self-acceptance, and encourages me to embrace authenticity and self-compassion."

Lorenzo Narciso likes to paint in a frenzied state, in search of a feeling that he only knows when he comes upon it. "Portrait paintings aren't really an exception, especially with *Rahil*," he says of the work. "She went through a bit of a transformation from the original sketch from life, but I kept to the vision I had when I initially painted her: a slightly somber, enigmatic kind of feeling with a beautiful, youthful glow. Together with my memory of her face from months before, this vision is what served as my guide in rummaging for details to fill in the gaps and make this portrait sketch a painting."

Throughout the history of Western classical portrait painting, few subjects have been revisited as often as the Madonna. But in this rendition, artist Kathryn Engberg decided to depart from the predominant narratives, and paint her subject without child and confidently solitary while retaining the aesthetic of high Renaissance beauty. "The worth of a woman has always been attached to motherhood which is inherently tethered to self-sacrifice—this work offers an alternative to challenge this assumption," says Engberg. "Portraiture serves as a powerful conduit for conveying the visceral experience of life and its emotional intricacies."

Face to Face remains on view through May 31. ●

The Salmagundi Arts Club 47 5th Avenue • New York, NY
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4

- 1
Janice Barnes,
Iris, oil on canvas,
18 x 14"
- 2
Lorenzo Narciso,
Rahil, oil on canvas,
9 x 7½"
- 3
Kathryn Engberg,
Madonna, oil on
linen, 20 x 16"
- 4
Giovanni Priante,
Reflection,
Hydrocal,
23 x 17 x 6"



JAMIE WYETH

Mysterious Familiar

Jamie Wyeth rises at 5:30 a.m. to begin a day of painting—often after a night of dreams. He keeps paper next to his bed to make notes about his dreams, and once woke up to find everything covered in graffiti. At other times, the dreams coalesce into ideas for paintings.

Somerville Manning Gallery in Greenville, Delaware, is showing recent and older paintings in the aptly titled exhibition *Mysterious Familiar*, through June 1.

The familiar are the people, places and things of his homes in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, and islands off the coast of Maine. The mysterious is the unknowns

of all the knowns. “I look at myself as just a recorder,” Wyeth says. “I mean, I just want to record the things that interest me in my life.”

At about 13 he took an art class with his aunt Carolyn who had studied classical methods with her father, N.C. Wyeth. “I discovered the lusciousness of oil paint in Carolyn’s studio. It was the antithesis of my father’s dry, dusty, egg tempera. I loved the look of it pouring from the tube. I loved feeling it, touching it. It makes you want to eat it, but it would probably kill you.”

He knew he wanted to “break out” from

the traditional approaches of N.C., Carolyn, his father Andrew and countless other Wyeth artists. Capable of matching their highly representational images, he developed a voluptuous, painterly style with non-natural viscerally stirring color.

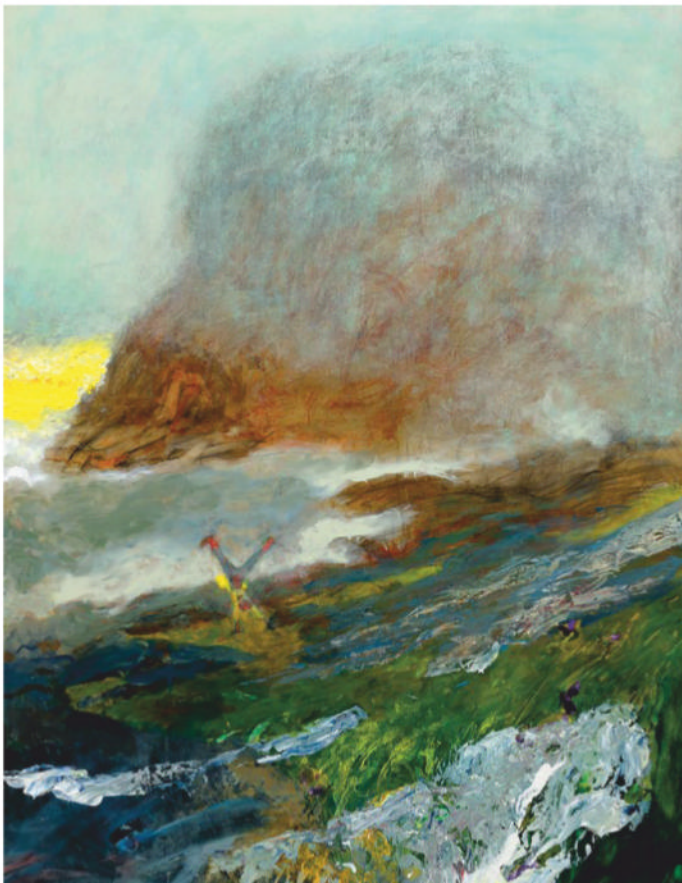
One painting in the exhibition, however, is nearly monochromatic. *The Sea, Photographed*, 2012, depicts an ethereal Andy Warhol in sport coat and shiny city shoes standing on the rocks of the coast of Maine with his camera aimed at the sea. “That came from a dream,” Wyeth explains. “He never came to Maine. He was a mysterious character and hid



1



2



3



4

behind this incredible visage. He had a secret life and worked like hell but wouldn't admit it. Other than my father, he was the only serious painter I'd known." The mystery of the painting and that of his friend is repeated in Wyeth's title for the painting. The passive construction suggests that the ferocious sea was calmed and made to pose for the famous artist.

Good Bye Gull Rock, 2023, was inspired by his encountering a young woman doing cartwheels below Gull Rock on Monhegan Island. It is composed of oil and acrylic on gesso panel. The foreground is a thick, abstract impasto of color, with

several blotches of purple recalling the ubiquitous wild iris of Monhegan. Gull Rock is barely suggested in the mist. The young woman is caught in midair.

Wyeth combines media and paints on supports from the gessoed panels of egg tempera paintings to cardboard. "I'm not a great technician," he admits. "I love mixing mediums and techniques. It's all unconscious. But when things click, the image comes alive." ●

Somerville Manning Gallery

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1
Blind Goat, 2023, oil and acrylic
on gesso panel, 40 x 30"

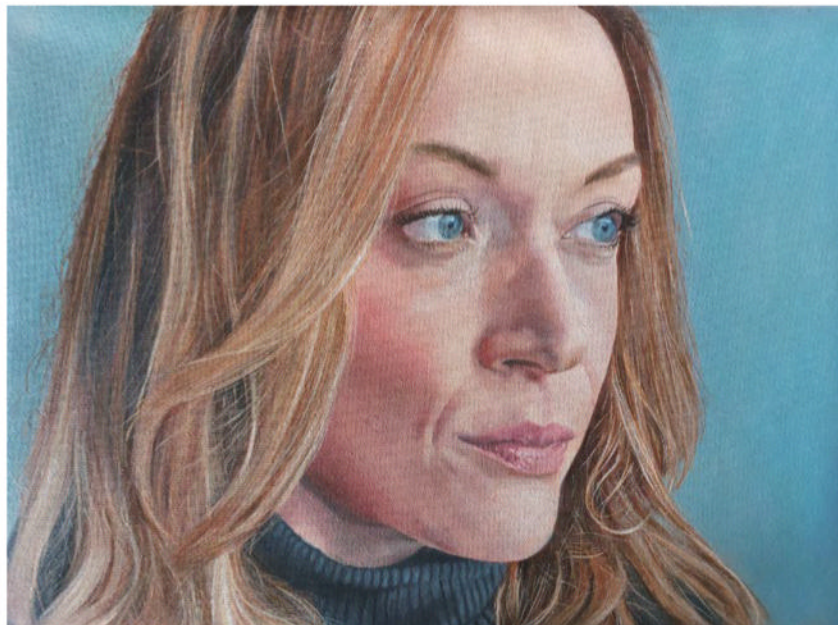
2
Kleberg: Nocturnal, 2023,
watercolor, acrylic, charcoal
and gouache on toned board,
20 x 16"

3
Goodbye, Gull Rock, 2023, oil and
acrylic on gesso panel, 40 x 30"

4
The Sea, Photographed, 2012,
combined mediums on toned
paper board, 31 x 26 1/4"

Intertwining Drama

Ferrante was the Grand Prize Winner in International Artist magazine's Challenge No. 139, People & Figures.



1
Me, artist, oil on cotton canvas glued to MDF panel, 12 x 15 3/4"

2
Nadia Ferrante in her studio.

3
Masks, pastel on pastelmat paper, 13 1/4 x 10"

Nadia Ferrante, an Italian artist hailing from the outskirts of Rome, has cultivated a profound appreciation for beauty since her childhood. She has always had an innate passion for art and draws inspiration from the Italian masters like Caravaggio, Michelangelo and Raphael, evolving to embrace the enchantment of Klimt, Degas and the Pre-Raphaelites.

In her paintings and drawings, Ferrante strives to "cultivate a profound emotional and psychological dialogue with viewers, delving into the intricate nuances of human emotions."

The artist works with oils, dry pastels, pastel pencils and the three-color technique, a deliberate selection aimed at aligning her artistic intent seamlessly with the overall piece. In *Masks*, Ferrante renders two faces of the subject's personality—one with a proud and direct gaze that attempts to hide a more fragile, insecure side from the rest of the world. "We all have masks that we wear at different times and with different people," says the artist. "With the surreal representation of the face [I try] to convey dynamism; trying to go beyond the two-dimensionality of the sheet of paper."

Another piece, *Melancholy*, depicts a close portrait of a







NADIA FERRANTE

Rome, Italy • nadiaherranteart@gmail.com • www.nadiaherrante.com





5

woman's face overcome with emotion. "This is a work in which [I wanted] to convey the dualism between light and dark in the feelings of the subject, which is apparently calm but in reality reveals a deep sadness and loneliness. The three-color technique enhances the contrast of light and shadow by emphasizing this dualism in feelings," says Ferrante.

Her oil *Me, artist*, a self-portrait of Ferrante at a three-quarter view, is a "classic exercise of the self-portrait in the mirror, to show [oneself] to the viewer

without a filter."

Ferrante has been featured in numerous local exhibitions and has had her work shown in multiple publications. She has two upcoming shows with 33 Contemporary: *Eros* in April and *Love* in September.

Above all, Ferrante says that she hopes to present a unique conception of beauty, emotionality and intertwining drama, inviting observers to explore the complexity of her visual storytelling. ●

4
Melancholy, pastel trois
crayon on Fabriano
paper, 12 x 8½"

5
Tides of Inner Struggle, oil
on cotton paper,
18 x 18"

American Art Collector magazine has changed the way artists, galleries and collectors connect. It has closed the gap that previously existed in the traditional art market. Spectacular and instant SOLD! stories keep rolling in. Check out some of the highlights of the sales and connections achieved from the pages of our magazine and throughout the market.



1A



1B

1 33PA sells two works featured in *American Art Collector*

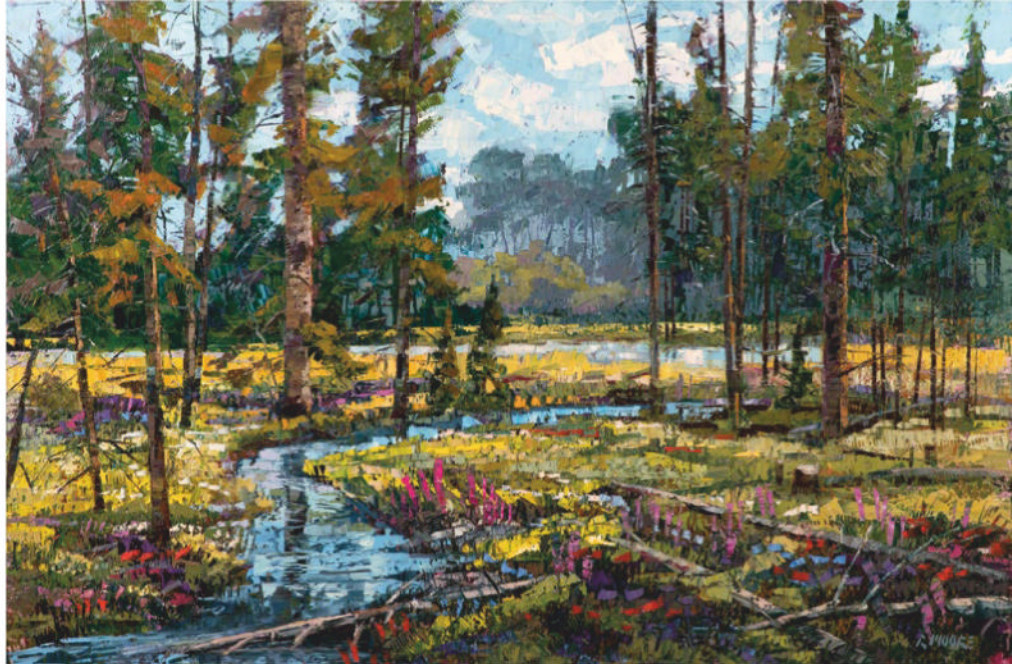
33PA, the virtual entity connected to 33 Contemporary and its Chicago and Miami galleries, and responsible for the shows launched on Artsy.net, is on a streak selling works featured in previews of their monthly online exhibitions. In the February issue we ran a preview of a group show titled *Flesh*. The first painting to sell was Nicole Bishop's luminous nude *First Light* (image 1A), one in a series

that explores the stages of a woman's metamorphosis. The piece sold to a repeat collector of the artist's work.

Then a piece by Brent Schreiber whose work was also in *Flesh* sold to a reader of *American Art Collector* who saw it in the magazine and bought it directly from the artist. As does much of Schreiber's work, *Listen 31* (image 1B), of a nude figure wearing headphones and holding a skull, while a vine winds around her and doves fly at her shoulder, combines modern and

classical imagery and themes.

"I believe being featured in *American Art Collector* has been a big influence in our sales this year," says 33PA curator Didi Menendez. "Two of the works published in the article sold and I believe AAC was a contributing factor to the sales. Otherwise these works may never have been seen by collectors because publishing nudes on social media is impossible."



2

2 Collectors buy large-scale Robert Moore landscape on the spot from Insight Gallery

"I had a very loyal client walk by the gallery and we had a very large (48-by-72 inch) Robert Moore landscape hanging on the back wall at the gallery," recounts InSight Gallery sales manager Adele Wells. "This painting stopped him in his tracks and he immediately knew he had to have it." He returned to the Fredericksburg, Texas, gallery the following day "and bought it before anyone else could."

Describing *Midday Splendor*, Moore says, "This location in Montana was a peaceful setting that had all the elements for a pleasing composition. The creek

allowed for the eye to enter the scene, creating a sense of depth. The summer colors were complemented by the cool hues of the sky and water with the distant trees inviting additional exploration and enjoyment."

3 Collectors buy a piece by James Rieck from Rubine Red Gallery in Palm Springs

Master Bedroom by James Rieck, who was last featured in the January issue of *American Art Collector*, sold out of Rubine Red Gallery in Palm Springs, California, to local collectors who had been thinking about purchasing the piece for a year. The piece is rendered in Rieck's signature style which uses tight cropping

to mimic the aesthetic of contemporary advertising.

Jason Howard, curator of Rubine Red Gallery in Palm Springs, says, "James Rieck's work continues to inspire our collectors. The feeling of nostalgia and a story not quite completely told is a wonder for their walls!" ●

Interested in having your SOLD! story featured in the pages of *American Art Collector* magazine? Email Sarah Gianelli at sgianelli@americanartcollector.com to find out how you can share your recent sales and successes.



3

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